Life and Works of the Venerable Don Bosco

by M S Pine

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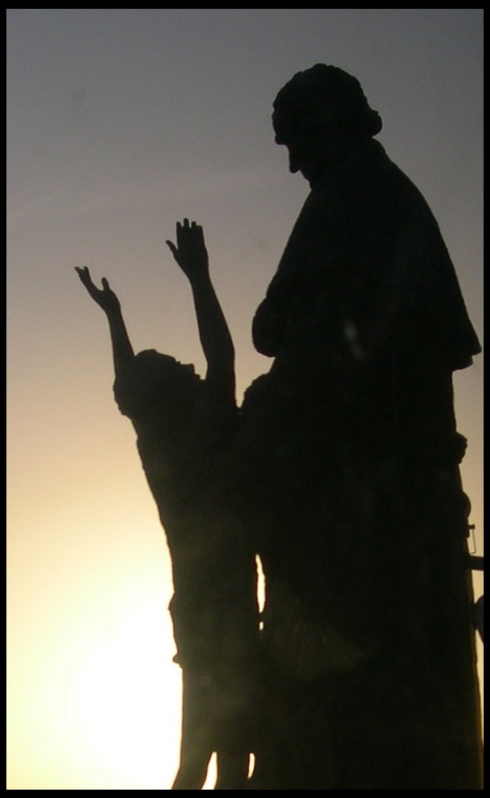

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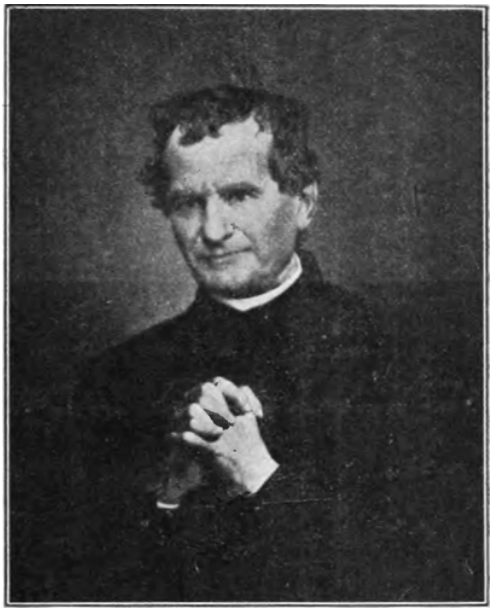
Foreword



This brief sketch of the holy life and marvellous achievements of a great inheritor of the spirit of Saint Francis of Sales, the Venerable Don Bosco is intended only to stimulate souls to a wider study of this loving Apostle of Youth, and so to a knowledge and reverence and appreciation, we dare to hope, which will urge them onward in the ways of holiness, and make them ardent and practical co-operators in the divine work of saving the young - the most pressing need of our timer - initiated by the Founder of the Salesian Society, and brought to wonderful issues through the miraculous power of God and the loving intervention of Mary, Help of Christians.

Fascinating reading is the "History of Don Bosco's Early Apostolate," by an eye-witness, his saintly son, Don Joseph Bonetti, which recounts in simple, affectionate language and comprehensive detail the story of the first twenty-five years of the Oratory of Saint Francis of Sales (1841-1866), eventful years teeming with prodigies in the spiritual and temporal order. A veritable Boswell, the author declares in his closing lines: "By it I would show my gratitude to Don Bosco, who received me as a boy, who educated me, both to religion and the priesthood, in which I have been able to be of some small service to others. May my hand wither and my tongue lose the power of speech if I should ever cease to speak of that home of charity and peace, I who have lived there so many years and enjoyed its hospitality."

A complete life of Don Bosco - a monumental one - has been furnished by the Reverend John Baptist Lemoyne, another saintly disciple of the Salesian Founder. It is circumstantial and graphic in the highest degree; and, abounding in personal as well as contributed reminiscences of Don Bosco, enriched with his instructions and letters, and teeming with the historic interest of the times, it possesses an indefinable charm, which is enhanced as we enter with bated breath the world of the supernatural in which Don Bosco lived and where he led even his little ones as to their Father's home.

But a Memoir that will hold the hearts of posterity in veneration and love is the autobiography written by Don Bosco at the express command of Pius IX, a precious manuscript still in the archives of the Society, and bearing the title, "Memoranda of the Oratory from 1835 to 1855. Exclusively for the Salesian Society." This amazing record of God's miraculous dealings with an elect soul has not yet been given to the public in its entirety; but excerpts of extraordinary beauty, couched in the simple language of humility, indicate what we are to expect when the Church shall have set her seal conclusively on the life and works of Don Bosco.

Georgetown, D.C.
November, 1916
M S Pine

In conformity with the Decree of Pope Urban VIII the writer declares that none but human authority is claimed for whatever of a supernatural mature is herein contained.

To the Reverend Salesian Fathers of the United States Who Continue the Saintly Traditions Of their Founder The

Venerable John Bosco And carry on with Love and arduous Self-sacrifice The noble and world-wide works He initiated This imperfect sketch of the Apostle of Youth Is Gratefully Dedicated.

Birth and Early Childhood

This year, 1915, all the nations are doing honor to the memory of a man who was born a hundred years ago, August 16, 1815, in sunny Italy, on the western slope of the Alps. They are keeping the centenary of his birth, some with magnificent celebrations. And who is this illustrious favorite of four continents? you will ask. Is he a great general who won famous victories? No, he never steeped his sword in the blood of his fellow-men Was he a renowned poet, a singer of songs to the heart of the people, a chanter of high epics, a great dramatist? Human histories do not so record him. Was he an extraordinary musician. then, or a Titian or Raphael in art that the worM so honors him? No, he was not a Napoleon, nor a Mozart, nor a Raphael. Yet I dare to say he was all of these, but in a sublime and supernatural manner; and I think when we have studied him a little together the generous hearts of my readers will be in accord with me.

The name of Don Giovanni Bosco, the saintly parish priest of Turin, the Apostle of Youth, has gone forth into the whole world. The Church has already set her seal of approval, on his sanctity by proclaiming her priest Venerable; and the Apostle of Youth he is rightly called, for he saved thousands, hundreds of thousands, of children from moral destruction.

In the far days of the past, so far back that they seem like a beautiful, hallowed dream, I learned to know and love Don Bosco, then in the zenith of his great achievements, a living

and powerful force for good. His name became a household word with us because of the profound appreciation of our mistress for his heroic character, his noble simplicity, and his astounding labors for the glory of God and the salvation of the poor little homeless boys roaming the streets of Italy - waifs in her beautiful, historic cities, no one to love them, to care for them, or educate them, but many, alas! to teach them crime and wickedness by word and example. Don Bosco had known the pangs of poverty, and his great heart, Christ-like in its vast capacity of loving, took them all in, and they became his own children, his own far-reaching, virtuous, and happy little world of souls.

You are familiar with Joseph's prophetic dream, how he and his eleven brethren were all binding sheaves in the field, when suddenly his sheaf arose and stood, and their sheaves all bowed down before it. How cruelly they hated him for that dream - selling him finally as a slave into Egypt, where the vision was realized when Joseph became ruler of the country and held their destinies in his hands. God often foreshadows the future to little children who are serving Him with their whole heart and soul. What beautiful visions the little Joan of Arc had of her supernatural mission as savior of France! And perhaps some of you have read the story of the child, Just de Breteniere, afterwards the heroic priest-martyr of Corea at twenty-eight years of age. In 1844, ere Just had completed his sixth year, he was one day playing with his brother in the garden, both digging, when suddenly Just stopped, and looking into the hole he cried: "Look, I see the Chinese! I see the Chinese! Come, let us dig deeper and we shall reach them." While digging vigorously, he described their appearance and costumes, and declared he could even hear their voices. "They are calling me," he said to his mother who had come to the spot; "and I must go to save them."

God favored our little John Bosco with such a vision, though he' told it as a dream to his mother and brothers at breakfast. Here is his own version of it: "I stood on a hillock, and saw numberless wild beasts approaching me from the neighboring wood; they terrified me as they advanced jumping, fighting and biting each other , when a mysterious voice told me to bring them to pasture. Immediately I held a crook to them; they followed, and, strange to say, I had then around me only a flock of gentle sheep."

The mother treated the dream lightly, as an illusion, though in her heart she trembled with joy as she thought it might be a token that this beloved son was called to the priesthood. Anthony and Joseph pleasantly ridiculed it; one warned him not to become a bandit chief; the other prophesied that he would have a drove of pigs. Later in life, at Barcelona, he confessed that the mysterious voice was the Blessed Virgin's; disguised as a shepherdess she gave him the crook, saying that he would tame the animals, and even indicated how this was to be accomplished. In a vision later he saw that some of the lambs became shepherds and assisted in guarding and directing the flocks. And the whole world is witness of the miraculous manner in which this prophetic dream has been fulfilled in the stupendous moral transformations Don Bosco wrought during his long and active life of seventy-two years.

Some one has said and truly: "If in creatures there is any spark of goodness, it comes from an intimate participation of God's abundance." Baptism brings to every Christian soul this abundance of God, since from the moment of the pouring of the waters He dwells there, One God in the Three Divine Persons, as in His palace, His temple, filling it with the Light Invisible before which angels bow in reverence. But the soul must be active, must be trained to know its heavenly dignity, and to love the Eternal Creator and Sovereign who

is living there within it. Poor little child, so helpless, so dependent! It grows and develops, and if there is no one to impart this divine knowledge in those early, impressionable years, what a lifelong, nay, what an eternal loss! What designs of God over that little creature are all frustrated!

Now who is the being to whom this beautiful, awe-inspiring mission is entrusted? Whose tender hand shall mould that little heart to good, who shall teach those little lips to murmur its first prayer, who shall instruct, console, strengthen it in virtue, even turn it wholly to God from the beginning? In all your hearts is the answer, Nature's own answer - the mother!

And such a mission did John Bosco's mother accomplish. Upright, religious, a truly holy woman, she participated in that abundance of God that I have told you of, and by continual prayer sweetened her hard life of toil and poverty. She must have married when very young, for at nineteen she was a widow with two children of her own, Joseph and John, and a step-son, Anthony, John, the youngest, was two years old when his father died. They had their little home on a slope of the Alps, their modest vineyard above, and below a pasture for the cattle, while opposite was a deep, wild forest. A lonely place, you might think, for our little John; but there he grew up. thoughtful, observant and prayerful, in the midst of grand and impressive scenery that was ever drawing his heart upward, while the pure, invigorating mountain airs were nourishing mind and body, and helping to build up that strong, magnificent physique which later rendered him capable of such incredible labors and hardships.

Margaret Bosco did not bring her sons up in softness or idleness. They rose with the sun in the summer, and long before dawn in the winter; dutiful children, they worked in

the fields and helped in the house - prayer, work and play divided their day; their meals were frugal and they took their night's rest on the floor. John was inured early, you see, to penance; but under this regime he flourished, and was the delight of his mother's heart because of his tender piety, his purity of conscience, and his love tor the poor. Margaret, though her prospect of education had been blighted by the repressive measures of the time, had a beautiful mind, with rare force of character; she was somewhat of a poet, too, for from nature and from little daily happenings, she could draw analogies most sweetly spiritual, and these have often a lasting influence with children.

The neighbors, near and from a distance, used to meet in Margaret's barn of a winter evening, where she would relate Bible stories or traits from the lives of the saints. Little John was frequently called upon to report the Sunday sermon - for he had a prodigious memory - or read aloud, or perform some juggling tricks. But these diversions, which he had learned at a fair, were generally enacted under a large old pear tree, his seances beginning and ending with prayer or a hymn. Indeed his only end in these humorous entertainments was to gain a moral influence over his audience: prayer and rosary, or no admittance, was his inflexible law, to which all willingly submitted.

He became a practiced acrobat, danced, turned somersaults, walked on his hands, his feet in the air, multiplied eggs, drew nuts from the noses of the spectators, and transferred watches to neighboring pockets, with other tricks, all enthusiastically applauded by his rural admirers. I have often thought that in his extraordinary genius for fun and humor we may find a partial explanation of the wonderful magnetism with which he attracted the boy nature of every class.

Education. Vocation to the Priesthood. Ordination

In April, 1826, when John was eleven years old, a mission was given by some renowned preachers at Buttigliera, a small town in the vicinity. Crowds from all the neighboring parishes attended, and among them the aged and saintly Cure of Murialdo, Don Calosso. As he was returning home one day he observed a little boy walking along the road in deep reflection.

"What is your name, my child?" he asked.

"John Bosco, padre mio," was the reply.

"And you come to hear the missionaries?" questioned the Curé, with a smile. "Very likely your mother could give you a sermon better suited to your capacity."

"That's true, sir," said John, with glowing face; "but I like to hear the missionaries, too."

"Now, my little one," said Don Calosso, in a challenging voice, "I will give you three pence if you will repeat four sentences of the last sermon."

This had been one of the most forcible sermons of the mission, "The Danger of Delay in Conversion." John paused a moment as if to gather up the divisions of the discourse and put them in order. Then clearly and without embarrassment, he gave almost word for word the exordium, the three points, and the conclusion. Don Calosso was surprised and delighted, and asked him if he would not like to study.

"My brother Anthony says it is useless waste of time for a peasant; but I would like to learn if I could."

"And have you ever thought of being a priest, my son?" persisted Don Calosso.

"I think if I knew enough myself," John answered modestly, "I should like to instruct poor neglected children and preserve them from wickedness."

The cry of his angelic soul was already mounting up to God: Da mihi animas: caetera tolle! the prayer of Saint Francis of Sales, the beloved Missionary-Bishop and Doctor of the Church - the prayer which was one day to be the watchword of his great triple Society of Salesians, engraved on their hearts, in all their utterances, stamped on their documents and books, and carved in golden evidence over their world-wide homes.

Eleven years old! The mystic dream had already become an incentive, a hope, a great desire in that young heart - a desire that burned more ardently the more it was repressed. But God was on his side. Don Calosso was not long in arranging matters with Margaret, and he himself became the boy's teacher. John's brothers were strong in opposition; but Margaret declared stoutly: "Divine Providence will assist us; certainly John was never intended for the plough."

John had begun to attend a public school at a distance, walking several miles a day to and from the village. But the complaints of Anthony at last forced him for the sake of peace to relinquish his studies and resume his daily labors on the farm. However, the charge of the cows and other animals being left to him, his book was his inseparable companion while guarding them. Don Calosso gave him lessons in the early morning after Mass; and John, his daily

labors at an end, studied and wrote his exercises at night. Poor boy! is it a wonder that his whole heart went out in sympathy to all the neglected boys in this great wide world?

The saintly Curé laid a solid foundation of study and doctrine in his youthful disciple; but in two years he was summoned to his eternal reward, leaving John without a guide. This trial, however, did not last long. Anthony, the step-brother, coming of age, a division of the property was made; and Margaret and her two sons, Joseph and John, separated from him, taking a smaller house. This gave John his liberty; and he joyously resumed his regular studies, making a specialty of Latin. In 1831 he entered the college at Chieri, and pursued with ardor the courses of science, literature and art; but his favorite studies were history, oratory, and the Sacred Scriptures.

A desire to enter a religious order now began to agitate the young student. He laid open the state of his soul to Don Cafasso, the holy director of the Ecclesiastical Institute of Turin, where he studied; enlightened by the Holy Spirit, his wise guide, in admiration of the ways of God over this soul still in its baptismal innocence, after prayer and examination, answered decisively: "My son, enter a seminary and finish your studies. I think you are called by God to be a good parish priest."

John followed his counsel: he pursued his studies more earnestly than ever, especially philosophy and theology, and with phenomenal success, for his soul was steeped in the abundance of God, and he learned more in Holy Communion, where the divine Light flooded his soul, than he did from his professors and books.

But the great day for which he had so long sighed and so fervently prepared came at last, and John Bosco was

ordained a priest of the Most High on June 5, 1841, the eve of Trinity Sunday, by the Archbishop of Turin, Msgr. Louis Franzoni. On Corpus Christi there was universal rejoicing in his native village of Castelnuovo, for there he celebrated that sacred feast, bearing the Blessed Sacrament in solemn procession through its festive streets, in the midst of an adoring multitude.

Three excellent livings were offered to the newly ordained priest. Consulting Don Cafasso anew, he was answered: "You should complete your course of moral theology and your preparation for the pulpit: give up all thought of benefices for awhile and come here." Don Bosco obeyed, and remained in the Institute for two years devoting himself to the higher studies in divinity. In intervals of intellectual labor, he accompanied Don Cafasso to the prisons, where each new scene of crime and punishment was to him a tragic revelation. The number of the prisoners, their moral misery and, more than all, the tender youth of many, astounded him and wrung his heart with pity. These children were orphans or the children of vicious parents; many of the boys would end - where? On the scaffold. This terrible thought haunted Don Bosco day and night, and strong and prevailing prayers went up to God and His Holy Mother for light and strength to help them, while, to render his petitions more effectual, he inflicted upon himself severe fasts and bodily penances.

The Venerable Don Cottolengo, one of Turin's most saintly apostles, met him one day and invited him to the great Hospital for youth he had founded. Don Bosco was moved to the soul at the sight of the sufferers, and spoke words of comfort on his way. As he was taking leave the Venerable Cottolengo, pressing the sleeve of his coat, said: "Your coat is too thin. Get one of stronger stuff, for a time will come when you will be pulled about by a great many boys."

Bartholomew Garelli. Foundation of the Oratory of Saint Francis of Sales

God, the Omnipotent, takes strange ways, simple and sometimes even apparently foolish ways of beginning a great and sublime work. On the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, December 8, 1841, Don Bosco was vesting for Mass when he heard the sacristan scolding a strange boy who entered the church for refusing to serve at the altar. "But I don't know how," said the poor little fellow. "Then be off with you," and the sacristan gave him a rough push.

Don Bosco turned to him: "Why do you ill-treat the child?" he said gently. "Call him back; I want to speak to him." Quite ashamed the sacristan obeyed, and Don Bosco told the boy to come to him after Mass. The sacred function concluded, he made the child sit down by him and began a series of questions. "My name is Bartholomew Garelli," he answered to the first. And I want my readers to remember the name, Bartholomew Garelli, because that little boy of fifteen, fatherless, motherless, homeless, began all the great, miraculous, boy-saving works which have made Don Bosco great on earth and great in Heaven. That boy of fifteen could not read or write, he had not made his First Communion, did not even know his prayers. how Don Bosco's heart ached as he heard the pitiful story! So he sat there with his arm around the little lad and taught him to make the Sign of the Cross, explaining what it meant and giving him his first

lesson on God his Father. Then he dismissed him kindly and the boy promised to return.

In a day or two Bartholomew presented himself again, and with him were two other boys seeking instruction. In the succeeding weeks the little band grew; and lo! in two months, February 2, 1842, Don Bosco had a class of twenty poor boys educating them and training them in virtue. He interested himself in their work, visited them in their homes, if they had any, provided some with lodging and food and procured places for those out of work. On Sundays he took them to church, and afterwards for recreation to some park or public place; so that all Turin soon became alive to the good he was doing.

All this time he was pursuing the highest course of theological studies, deeming it imperative to fit himself to cope with the difficult questions of the time, with doctrinal, social, philosophical and political problems that agitated individuals and nations. In fact, he was preparing himself for authorship and studying a style which he had not valued so much in his early days of flowery rhetoric, that style which would appeal most powerfully to the heart and conscience of the people. He sought to instruct, to convince, to persuade. And right here I may digress a little and tell you that he succeeded and later put forth burning doctrinal and moral treatises that ran up into the thousands and hundreds of thousands. He wrote about a hundred volumes in his own name and many others anonymously.

His studies finished Don Cafasso questioned him as to the future. "I am ready to do what ever you appoint," replied the young priest, with the docility of a child.

"Three appointments await your choice," said his director; "a curacy at Asti, a professorship of moral theology here in the

Institute, or chaplaincy of the Hospital near the Refuge. Which do you prefer?"

"Whichever you think best, Father. I have only one preference - to dedicate myself to the young; but your decision will be to me the will of God."

A few weeks of vacation, and on Don Bosco's return to Turin, his guide had determined upon the chaplaincy, where he was to assist Don Borel in the management of an institute of four hundred girls. His friends still urged him to accept a benefice offered by the Archbishop. But Don Bosco replied: "And who will take care of my poor children?"

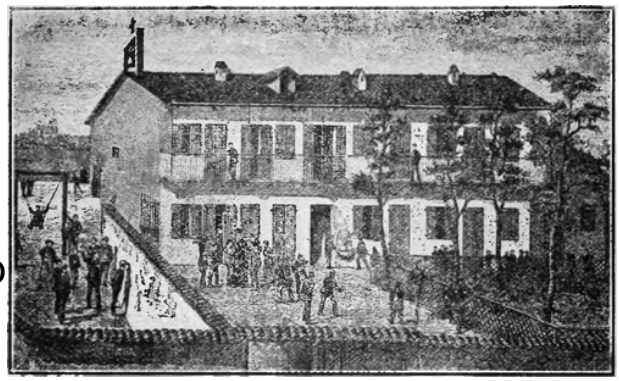
By this time they had increased to three hundred, and he had initiated the famous evening classes. The society was known as "The Oratory of Saint Francis of Sales", a saint whom Don Bosco chose above all others for their patron because of his sweetness and charity; for these were the two chief virtues he required in dealing with the poor little children he so loved.

Through Don Borel two large rooms were allowed for the Oratory meetings, one serving as a chapel; but this limited space could not accommodate two thirds of the boys. However, seven months of progress ensued, with ever increasing numbers. The latter brought trouble, for the authorities of the Hospital grew suspicious of the little army, and eviction followed. The municipality in the meantime had become keenly interested in the evening classes, and through the influence of Archbishop Franzoni, they granted to Don Bosco the use of Saint Martin's Church at stated hours for the little multitude, and afterward Saint Peter's; but three hundred boys playing in the courtyard - and Don Bosco never repressed their fun - distracted and annoyed so

many, priests and parishioners, that their destiny was soon settled.

Ejected and at last homeless, did Don Bosco's courage fail or his hope in God's providence waver? Not for a moment. Calling his grieving children together, he said with his usual cheerfulness: "My dear children, God's sky must be our roof, our next meeting in the open air, but do not be troubled; in time I shall find a home for you."

A Typical Sunday. Opposition and Trial. Valdocco. Illness of Don Bosco



A personal relation by one of the actors in these Sunday dramas tells its own story of the happiness and the potent moral influence which these red-letter days brought into so many young lives. I am sure my readers will find it of interest.

"At the end of each meeting, before separating, the good Father always told us the excursion for the next Sunday; the road, program and hour; gave advice as to our conduct and asked us to be as numerous as possible. 'If you have any comrades, invite them for me; the more the merrier.' The walk for the next Sunday was a topic of conversation during the week in our workshops and families; it exacted more attention, obedience and application to duty so as not to incur the punishment of being kept at home. The chief walks, carefully varied, were: The Mont des Capucines; Notre Dame des Champs; Pozzo di Strada; and Notre Dame des Lacs d'Avigliano. Those happy days are engraved in our memories; piety and joy reigned among us and influenced our future lives. Arrived at some church in the precincts of a town, Don Bosco asked leave to celebrate Mass, a permission always granted; at a signal the noisy band gathered together to attend with a celerity and unanimity which amazed the bystanders. Catechism followed, then breakfast; the grass or the rocks supplied the place of tables, forks were unnecessary; as for wine, the rivulets or fountains supplied what was needful; those who had too much shared

with less fortunate boys; and Don Bosco fed those who had none. It is true, bread failed now and then; but gaiety and a good appetite never. Continuing our walk, we stopped somewhere to chant Vespers, the itinerant Oratory already possessing a good choir: catechism was heard a second time; the rosary was recited while walking; and at sunset we marched again into Turin, fatigued, but with light consciences and contented hearts."

A beautiful picture, that might have been drawn by a hundred thousand boys and more since those early days of test and trial. Trial - yes, for God's works are built on a foundation of pain. It was in keeping with the divine plan that harsh and severe criticisms of Don Bosco and his work began to be circulated; the clergy of Turin complained; the civil authorities saw danger lurking in those large gatherings; persecution set in from all sides; and Don Bosco's friends at last said: "Give up the boys! You can't fight against all this prejudice and opposition; no one will rent you a house for them; the authorities are against you; even good people are down on you. Give it all up, in the name of God!"

"God's mercy has sent me these boys," answered Don Bosco heroically; "I shall not give one up; if I cannot hire a house I shall build one; and I tell you that one day, with God's help and the protection of His Blessed Mother, these children and a great many more will have a house, workshops, a college, a church and their own professors," and his eyes glowed with a supernatural light as he raised his hands toward Heaven.

No more was said and his friends left him free, rather awed at his sublime faith and hope, though many wise people thought him mad.

Just then, when all seemed lost, a man named Pinardi, offered Don Bosco a lease for some years of an old, neglected house, surrounded by a large field, in Valdocco, a suburb of Turin. Valdocco is very celebrated in Salesian annals, for there Don Bosco settled on Easter Sunday, 1846, and began his permanent work. A poor, broken-down house indeed it was; but there were playgrounds and plenty of room to build for the five hundred children that had to be sheltered there. The government was still obstinate in its opposition. King Charles Albert, however, made investigations, became convinced of the good and lasting results of Don Bosco's work and extended to him his approval and assistance. Among these orphans and waifs were found many with latent and extraordinary talents; these were educated to their capacity by the holy director himself, aided by the Abbé Borel, his devoted friend, and other good priests, who often went to help him in his arduous labors; and in their turn these boys became teachers of lower classes.

God is jealous of His elect and would have them like His Son in suffering; on the bed of pain He holds long and serious and loving commune with the soul, and the light of His Holy Spirit shines in its secret places uniting it more closely to the Adorable Trinity during this enforced solitude. Don Bosco was to be His victim for a while; he fell ill with bronchitis, accompanied with a violent cough and dangerous inflammation, and in eight days he was at death's door. With heavenly resignation he received the Last Sacraments, amid the tears of his friends, and to the indescribable grief of his boys of the Oratory, whose prayers and Communions were fervently offered for his recovery. "Some watched in prayer

through the night; others vowed to say the Rosary daily, some for a year, and not a few for their whole lives. Many fasted on bread and water, and promised to fast for months or years if Our Lady would restore their beloved Don Bosco to health." Father Borel was watching at midnight by his side expecting at any moment to receive his last sigh, when suddenly he felt inspired to ask the dying man to pray for his recovery.

"Let us leave God to do His Holy Will," was Don Bosco's reply.

"Say at least, Lord, if it be Thy Will, let me recover." But Don Bosco was silent.

"Grant me this favor," pleaded his friend. "Say only those words and say them with your whole heart."

Don Bosco yielded and in a weak voice said: "Yes, Lord, if it so please Thee, let me recover."

The prayer was heard; and the next morning the doctors to their astonishment found him, not dead, but out of all danger. Joy flooded every heart, and the universal gladness was still more pronounced when Don Bosco was able, supported by a cane, to be among his dear children again cor the first time. A year of rest was prescribed; but after three months spent with his own family at Castelnuovo, where the boys and those of the neighboring villages formed a new Festive Oratory every Sunday around him, his heart was moved by the entreaties and affectionate letters of his Turin disciples, and he turned his steps again to Valdocco, where he was to refrain from teaching, preaching or hearing confessions!

"At first," he said years after, "I certainly intended to obey and keep my promise; but when I saw that Abbé Borel and the other Fathers were unable to attend to all the boys, and

that on feast-days many of them were without confession or instruction, I could no longer remain idle. So I took up my wonted occupations again, and for upwards of twenty-five years I have had no further need of doctors or medicine. This has made me believe that after all methodical work does not injure bodily health."

Margaret Bosco in Valdocco. Success of the Oratory. Attempts on the Life of Don Bosco

We must not overlook those of the gentler sex who contributed of their means and labors to Don Bosco's work, the ladies who clothed such numbers of his poor children, made and mended their garments and nursed them when they were sick. But it was Margaret Bosco, his saintly mother, who led the way. Poor Margaret! She was already fixed in the home of her son Joseph and loved and was beloved by his children; she seemed, indeed, settled in repose for the rest of her life when one day during his convalescence at Becchi, he seemed unusually serious as he sat down to talk with her. She noticed it and asked the cause.

"Madre mia," he said caressingly, "I need a mother for my poor boys, some one to care for them and love them, some one to manage my large household. Ah, if I could only bring the most precious treasure I have here in Becchi - my mother - to Turin!"

Margaret started. The tears sprang to her eyes; a few words of grief at such a separation - final and complete, she saw it must be - from her lifelong home; a little word of the great sacrifice demanded of her, escaped her lips; but in a moment, calm and resolute and brushing away the tears, she said simply: "My son, Joseph and the children do not

need me; but you do. If you think such a step will be pleasing to our Lord I am ready to go with you to Turin."

And she went, the brave woman, and never flinched or failed Don Bosco during the ten years that she lived in dire poverty, in toils and sacrifices, the extent of which even Don Bosco's passionate love did not suspect - she was too skillful in hiding her sufferings. Five hundred children, think of it! Margaret washed and ironed for them, made and repaired their clothes, cooked, swept and did the menial work of the house, besides cultivating a vegetable garden and keeping a poultry yard. She was never idle and no religious was ever poorer. Mamma Margaret, as she was called, was so beloved that she had a host of little self-constituted helpers who took delight in relieving her. Other kind women, too, came to her assistance in the sewing and laundry work, or she would have fainted under her burden. And, amid all these activities, she was leading the most beautiful interior life of union with God, with the Divine Sufferer on Calvary, and with His Blessed Mother, her model from childhood.

You will think I have said much in praise of this heroic mother; but the present Archbishop of Bologna, Monsignor Gusmini, lately raised to the Sacred College of Cardinals by his Holiness, Benedict XV, in his eloquent pastoral, delivered to the "Salesian Co-operators" at the celebration of the centenary of Don Bosco's birth, speaks of her as a holy and admirable woman who not only had a share in the individual life, but also in the social life of Don Bosco; and placing around Margaret the aureole of sanctity, he compares her to Saint Teresa, Saint Jane Frances de Chantal and the Blessed Sophie Barat.

With his noble and self-sacrificing mother Margaret at the household helm, guiding and ordering all with the prudence of the valiant woman, Don Bosco was now able to give his

whole attention to the development of his great ideal. The studies were carried on with such ardor and assiduity that soon the Oratory of Saint Francis of Sales had its own professors in the various scholastic departments; and wonderful vocations to the priesthood became evident, so that a college and seminary grew within the Oratory. There were day schools for those who had leisure and night schools for those who had to work; for Don Bosco would educate, as far as possible, every member of his Society and give him a better hope of success in life. Here might be seen Savoyards, Swiss, Lombards and several other nationalities, all living together in harmony and brotherhood, though they had their trained regiments and bands and fought many sham battles: all was activity, but tempered and seasoned with rare and solid piety.

They were taught to repress nature, to overcome their passions and bad inclinations, to be mutually considerate and helpful toward the neighbor, as well as to unite in prayer, to hear holy Mass, and approach the Sacraments. Day by day the character was formed and strengthened by such loving guidance, perfect prudence and divinely inspired watchfulness, that good Christian citizens were being trained for society, and pure-hearted Levites for God's Church. A majority of the boys were engaged in employments of various kinds during the day, and alas! too often under wicked masters or among vicious companions, so that to the keen, far-seeing eyes of Don Bosco, their future was full of peril; for the good wrought in their hearts by the restraining influences and pious practices of the Oratory might even be neutralized by the evil atmosphere which surrounded them.

Don Bosco considered deeply all phases of the psychical problem, so momentous for time and eternity, and prayed fervently for light. He visited and made gentle but forceful remonstrances to the masters, which were met only with hatred and threats of violence. Their enmity became so bitter, indeed, that his life was often in danger; he was shot at several times, twice while vesting for Mass, but the bullet turned aside and left him unharmed. More than once he was brutally insulted, knocked down and roughly treated. Once he was attacked with a butcher's knife by an apparent madman, but escaped almost by miracle. A friend of Don Bosco asked the assassin what motive had urged him to attempt the life of so good a man.

"I had none at all," he answered coolly, "except the eighty francs paid me to feign madness and stab him."

"Eighty francs to kill a man?" echoed Don Bosco's friend. "Well, if I give you one hundred and sixty not to injure him?"

"Just double," said the bandit; "then I promise to guard him." And he kept his word.

Don Bosco was called one night to hear the confession of a dying woman. Margaret sent four pupils armed with sticks to escort him. No sooner was Don Bosco within the room of the supposed patient than a blow from a cudgel was dealt him on the shoulders; but his faithful boys, alert on the watch, rushed to his aid and rescued him from the would-be murderers. A touching story is told of one of Don Bosco's most devoted disciples, afterward Monsieur Buzzetti, Inspector of the School of Arts and Sciences, that when a boy, he imperilled his life for his kind benefactor, receiving into his right hand the ball levelled at his master; part of the thumb and forefinger was torn away; and but for this Buzzetti would have been a priest.

Don Bosco's Protector, Grigio

You remember the bears that avenged the prophet Eliseus and the tame wolf of Saint Francis of Assisi. So history connects the name of Don Bosco with a mysterious dog sent to be his protector during these most dangerous years of his life, - a beautiful, strong grey dog, whom they named "Il Grigio," the grey. Sometimes returning from Turin to Valdocco late at night, he pursued his way without a thought of danger, though the place was full of quagmires and thick hedges, safe hiding places for assassins. One night a vague fear assailed him, when suddenly a huge dog approached, wagging his tail; turning, he walked beside Don Bosco and escorted him to the Oratory, but refused to enter. Afterward, whenever he was late, the dog was sure to appear on one side or other of the lonely road.

Three times Grigio saved his life. One dark winter night Don Bosco took a short cut home. He noticed two men who had a suspicious appearance, and hurried his pace toward an inhabited house. In vain; one of the men rushed forward and threw a cloak over his head, and his mouth was instantly gagged. All hope had left their victim's heart, when suddenly a terrible howl was heard, more like the growl of an infuriated bear; it was Grigio, who sprang first on one, then on the other of the men, biting, howling and finally throwing one of the men down. Terrified, they asked Don Bosco's pardon, adding, "Call off your dog or we shall be torn in pieces." Don Bosco called Grigio, and the cowardly wretches beat an inglorious retreat.

An assassin once fired two shots at his face, but they missed, and Grigio put the men to flight. Once at midnight, passing through the Place Milan, he saw a man following him armed

with a great cudgel and hastened his steps, hoping to reach the Oratory in safety. He was at the top of the declivity, when he descried a group of men, who surrounded him with cudgels raised to strike; but suddenly the faithful Grigio appeared and sprang upon the men in such fury that they besought Don Bosco to quiet him; at his word the dog left them and they fled in the darkness, while the heaven-sent deliverer accompanied Don Bosco to the Oratory.

Once Grigio assumed a different manner of guardianship. One night Don Bosco, sometime after his arrival at Valdocco, found he had forgotten an important commission in Turin. He was preparing to start back, Margaret in the meantime using her best efforts to dissuade him; with reassuring words, however, he called some of the boys, and went to the front door, when, lo! there was Grigio stretched at full length on the threshold.

"O this is good!" said Don Bosco; "our party will be the stronger.

He called the dog, but Grigio would not stir; twice he tried to go out, but Grigio made objections.

Margaret laughed and teased him. "The dog has more sense than you, my son; do you obey him." And Don Bosco had to return to his room.

A little later a neighbor came to warn him not to leave the house, as evil-looking men were prowling about the road. Don Bosco was at supper one evening with his mother and some priests, when Grigio walked into the boys' playground. Young Buzzetti cried out: "This is Grigio, Don Bosco's dog." All surrounded him, lavishing caresses on the beloved guardian of their master. They led him to the refectory where he went joyously to Don Bosco, refusing any food. The dog,

resting his chin on the table, looked at Don Bosco with deep affection; then going away he disappeared, no one knowing whence he came or whither he went. His mission was fulfilled.

But thirty years after, Don Bosco, with one of his young priests, Don Durando, was passing through an unknown road, the rain falling in torrents. They lost their way, and Don Bosco slipped into a quagmire.

"Ah!" he cried, "if my faithful Grigio were here!"

His wish was scarcely uttered when a huge dog appeared. Don Durando was frightened, but Don Bosco caressed the dog, who showed great joy.

"You say this is Grigio?" inquired the young priest.

"Undoubtedly," was the answer, "the same size, the same color, and he recognizes me: but if you are really my old Grigio," he said affectionately to the dog, "you will lead us out of this peril." The dog started off and Don Bosco followed. Soon the three arrived at the Bordighera Oratory. Don Bosco turned to thank Grigio - but he had vanished.

How many conjectures have been offered as to the personality of this guide and guardian! I think that most persons concur in the opinion that it was Don Bosco's angel guardian. Some deem it to have been a special angel sent on that mission of deliverance. I know one who considers it the more plausible theory that one of Don Bosco's own boys - for many died young - had come to be the protector of him who had saved his soul; the profound parting look of affection in Grigio's eyes seems to support his theory. Or might it have been a soul from purgatory, Don Bosco's conquest from hell, that had been deputed to preserve the

life of the holy Apostle of Turin? That the dog was a supernatural protector, seems to be the prevailing opinion.

Purchase of Valdocco Property. Church of Saint Francis of Sales. The Cholera

It was not until 1851 that Don Bosco was enabled to purchase the Valdocco property, the owner, Pinardi, constantly requiring 80,000 francs, an exorbitant price. In February of that year he sought Don Bosco and agreed to accept 30,500, which was its real value. The offer was timely. This acquisition had been the object of the saintly apostle's desires for five years; and now, though his purse was empty, he concluded the contract with eyes fixed confidently on Divine Providence, assured that Mary, Help of Christians would be as ever his intercessor and treasurer.

Scarcely had Pinardi disappeared, when Don Cafasso, his spiritual director, entered with a gift of 10,000 francs from the Countess Casazza. The next day a trust fund of 20,000 francs was placed at his disposal, and a banker, his friend, supplied the lacking 500 francs. It was a joyous day for all when the contract was signed and the Valdocco fields became the property of the Oratory.

Don Bosco saw that this was a golden moment for securing a public house near by, the Giardiniera, which had long been a source of fear and sorrow to him on account of the danger to his boys from the proximity of vicious examples. He hastened to make overtures to the proprietor, which were at once accepted; and the necessary funds for the purchase poured in with promptitude.

"And now, madre mia," he said to his chief and most cherished counsellor, "I am going to erect a beautiful church

on the site of the Giardiniera, and dedicate it to Saint Francis of Sales."

"But where will the money come from?" inquired practical Margaret. "You know we have nothing - but debts."

"Madre mia, would you contribute if you could?"

"Certainly, you know I would, poverello mio."

"And do you think God is less liberal?"

"You are always right, my son; we will pray with the innocent children God has entrusted to us. If we are imprudent, it is in His service."

His heart full of gladness and hope he began the enterprise; the cornerstone was laid July 21, 1851, and on June 20, 1852, the new church, free of debt, was consecrated under the title of Saint Francis of Sales, a solemn and ever-memorable day for the Oratory, and for the gentle Bishop of Geneva an increase of devotion as the beloved patron of the Institute.

The evening after the sacred ceremony beheld him closeted anew with "madre mia", all on fire with another project. His children must no longer live in such a ruined house; they must have a better and more commodious home. Margaret was alarmed; but he calmed her anxiety, declaring, "Money will not be wanting. The priest who spends liberally for God becomes the channel for the alms of the faithful." His hopes were more than realized, for from the king, Victor Emmanuel, down to the most lowly, all were eager to contribute to the new building.

In 1854 the cholera broke out in Italy, and its ravages were felt in many of the provinces. In Turin business was

suspended, the rich fled to the mountains and the victims of the scourge died daily without help and were left unburied. Valdocco did not escape - whole families were cut off. Don Bosco adopted every possible sanitary measure to hinder its fatal inroads among his children. He offered himself to God for his flock, and more frequent and fervent prayer and greater purity of conscience became the law of the pupils.

As the hospitals filled Don Bosco accepted the charge of one in Valdocco and appealed to his young disciples for co-operation.

"Should any of you sacrifice your life in this noble charity, it will be for you a martyrdom, with the certainty of obtaining the palm of everlasting victory," he concluded with solemn assurance.

Large numbers of his devoted youths eagerly pressed forward to answer his call; but Don Bosco chose only forty of the most robust among the volunteers for this duty of charity, so fraught with danger. Four tragic months they labored heroically in the service of the sick and dying under the eye of their beloved master.

Don Bosco was everywhere; he was confessor to open the gates of heaven to the departing souls, to speed them on the way with the Bread of Life; he was physician and nurse, loving and skillful, not disdaining the most menial acts in his wide-souled devotedness. After the toils and hardships of the day, he sought repose still dressed, ready for any emergency, and was called more than once during the night to afford aid to the dying. In the Oratory all was activity. Demands on Margaret's patience, time and supplies were unceasing. She gave at last the table linen and even the altar linen for the relief of the suffering.

But the dread ordeal came to an end. God's Providence had watched over the Father and his children, and the relentless herald of Death had not been allowed to claim one victim.

Cardinal Cagliero, the celebrated Salesian, now seventy-eight years of age, in a recent lecture in Rome (Feb. 1916) on his apostolate in Patagonia and the Argentine, told the following thrilling experience of his own during this period. "In the August of 1854," said the venerable Prince of the Church, "the cholera raged at Turin and I lay sick in the infirmary of the Oratory. I was then sixteen years of age, and the physicians vowed I had come to the end of my life. In the house it was said I was reduced to this state cause I had committed the 'imprudence' of accompanying Don Bosco on a visit to the lazaretto. Don Bosco was requested by the doctors to visit me and to administer the last Sacraments. He came to my bedside. I remember him yet, just as if I saw him here this moment.

"'Which is better for you,' he asked me, 'to get well or to go to Paradise?'

"To go to Paradise, I replied.

"Very well,' he added. 'But the Madonna wishes you to be cured this time. You will get well. You will be a priest. And you will take your breviary and travel far, far, far.'

"A stupendous vision then opened before the eyes of the Father. Drawing near to my bed (he was to recount it only after thirty-five years) he saw it surrounded by a savage people of tall stature and fierce aspect, of copper-colored skin and with thick black hair tied by a string at the forehead. He did not know then to what race these figures belonged; and only later on he opened in secret a manual of geography and found there that they belonged to the type

of Patagonians. To the mind of the Father there then opened out a vision of that immense region, which he foretold would be rich in minerals, in industries, in factories, in railways, blessed by the precious gift of the Christian faith through the labors and the blood of his own spiritual family.

"I certainly got well. In that moment the fever left me. And I did not even receive the Sacraments because, since I grew well suddenly, it seemed to be better to do this when I should have risen. I must add that all these particulars Don Bosco revealed only after I had initiated the evangelization of Patagonia and was already its Vicar-Apostolic; because, precisely through fear of being guided by his personal impression, he never wished to take a leading part where I or my duties were concerned; but he rather left everything to be disposed by Divine Providence that it might direct all things exactly as it had shown to the Father in the glance into the future."

The Immaculate Conception. A Catechism Class. Signor Urbain Ratazzi. Prisoners

December 8th of that eventful year, 1854, was a day of high festivity at the Oratory - the day on which the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady was proclaimed by Pius IX. A solemn Te Deum was sung; and Don Bosco preached a sermon that was a model of eloquence and teeming with sound doctrine, every word of which was a flame that shot forth from the fire of love that consumed his heart for Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God.

On one of the following Sundays Don Bosco was teaching catechism. To his explanation of dogma and morals, he was accustomed to add remarks upon the history of the Church. Suddenly one little boy rose to his feet and questioned the Father.

"If Trajan was unjust in banishing Pope Saint Clement, what must we think of our government exiling Archbishop Franzoni?"

There was a large congregation; no doubt strangers were there. Don Bosco, never disconcerted, answered the question clearly and briefly, concluding with the words: "Let us leave the problems of the present epoch to the decision of the catechism class of a hundred years to come, when we shall have passed into the domain of history. Let us be satisfied in respecting authority, whether civil or religious."

The child persisted, but was adroitly silenced by the catechist.

On leaving the chapel Don Bosco was accosted by a stranger of distinguished appearance, who congratulated him on the clear reply he had given to the boy's difficult question.

"You came to criticise?" asked Don Bosco with a smile.

"Perhaps so," was the answer.

"May I ask, sir, to whom I have the honor of speaking?"

"I am Urbain Ratazzi, the prime minister."

"What?" exclaimed Don Bosco in admiration, "the great Ratazzi?"

"Yes, Father, and in future you need not dread interference. Though the Archbishop's acts do not meet with my approval, yet I am glad he was not banished during my administration."

The interview lasted an hour; Ratazzi visited the Oratory and departed so well pleased that, while he remained in power, Don Bosco had in him a faithful protector and advocate. These two men, both renowned in Italy and beyond it, met later in more than one friendly conference; for Ratazzi esteemed Don Bosco and in his turn the Apostle of Turin hoped to induce the prime minister to adopt the methods of reform he had found so efficacious and introduce them into prisons and reformatories for boys.

"Let us try to prevent instead of repressing crime," he urged, "a more humane and a far more economical method... Form Christians and you have good citizens; but, alas! I know we can never attain to the realization of this ideal; if we could,

judges, prisons, police and even a standing army might be suppressed."

Ratazzi was convinced; and, though his convictions never found practical execution, yet he showed publicly his confidence in the founder of the Salesian Society. I cannot forbear quoting one of many remarkable incidents of Don Bosco's after experience in which Ratazzi's influence was the turning point. It inculcates, too, more than one great lesson and proclaims in a striking manner Don Bosco's supremacy in the domain of human hearts.

In May, 1855, Don Bosco preached a retreat of eight days to the prisoners of the chief jail of Turin, La Generala. His words were so luminous and effective, so filled with the Spirit of God, that nearly four hundred of his hearers were moved to sincere contrition and approached the Sacraments with great fervor and piety. The retreat over, Don Bosco's fertile mind and great heart invented a most astonishing mode of reward for his penitents. He went to the governor of the jail and asked a day's freedom for all who had attended the holy exercises.

"A day's freedom!" echoed the governor in consternation. "We should have to send all the soldiers in the kingdom to re-capture the criminals."

"Pardon me, governor, you are mistaken," insisted Don Bosco gently; "I shall appeal to honor, conscience; I do not want even one policeman."

The governor frowned; he evidently thought Don Bosco mad.

"Honor? Conscience?" he questioned. "The honor of thieves! The conscience of assassins!"

Nevertheless, he forwarded the petition and was astounded when it was returned "Granted," and signed by Ratazzi. He went to remonstrate with the prime minister, but was quietly told, "I wish the experiment tried."

Don Bosco's proposal was hailed with joy by the prisoners. While awaiting the permission, he talked to them in a fatherly manner, appealing to their honor and every one gave his word not to try to escape.

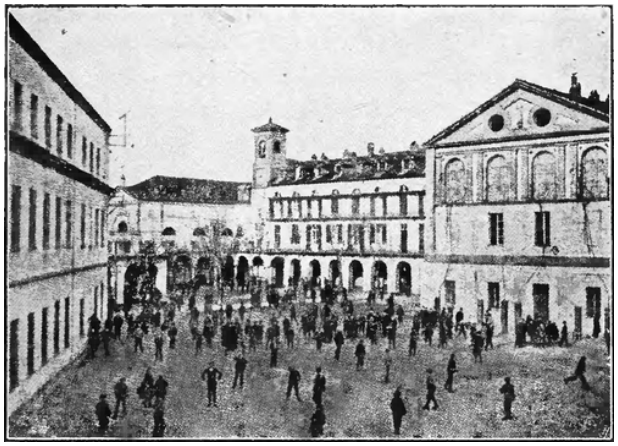
I cite a brief record of this strange holiday - this little oasis of happiness in the hard desert life of those unfortunate men:

"The next morning - a glorious day - Don Bosco, with his suite, started after Mass for the royal gardens of Stupinigi. Three or four hundred prisoners, marching in perfect order, joyous and unguarded, through the streets of Turin, solely under Don Bosco's custody, was a strange sight. The way to the gardens was long, but the prisoners, though weakened by confinement, found it short; the air was sweet, the walk through the green fields delightful; a pleasure long unknown.

"Observing that Don Bosco seemed fatigued, they surrounded him and mounted him on the donkey, from which they unloaded the baskets of provisions, to hoist them to their own shoulders. By turns they led the animal, chatting at their ease with the good Father, to whom they owed this happy day. In the evening the Turin people, amazed, saw them return in equal discipline, not one missing. Don Bosco, in duty bound, went to thank Ratazzi and give a report of the day. 'Indeed,' said the minister, 'you apostles of God have more power in your moral influence than we have in the material influence which we command. You persuade and vanquish the heart: that we cannot do; it is a reserved department.'"

Can anyone conceive of a purely human leader in a procession like this?

Death of Mamma Margaret



Don Bosco's heart overflowed in thanksgiving to God, when, in November, 1856, his new boarding-school was completed free from debt, and filled to its limit with his joyous children.

But a cross was coming; the health of his beloved mother was visibly failing.

A violent inflammation of the lungs had set in, and her sufferings were intense, borne with the heroic patience which had characterized the whole life of this remarkable woman. "The boys prayed fervently for her cure," writes Father Bonetti, "for she was to all of us a second mother, and by her kindness and maternal care made us forget that we had lost our own mother or were far away from her. At almost every hour of the day some were at the patient's room to inquire after her health. In the evening after prayers all awaited with anxiety some news from Don Bosco. The sorrow was general when the last rites of Holy Church had been administered, for we knew that death was fast approaching."

Margaret would not be removed to the new home. "It is too splendid for this poor old woman," she said; "let me die poor, as I have always lived poor."

After giving her last advice to Joseph and his children, she spoke with affection and even authority to John, entering into minute, confidential details:

"Despise splendor in your works; have effective and real poverty as your object. Have confidence in your fellow-laborers in the Lord's vineyard, but see that their aim is the glory of God. As your Institute gloriously increases, it should increase in humility, and not esteem itself as superior to other religious houses. Each member should willingly be second to others in the wide road of charity, where there is abundant room for all. God will bless those who act thus."

More than once Margaret expressed her happiness at seeing the numbers of Don Bosco's children who now wore the soutane. "They are my children, too," she would add with a smile.

On the 25th of November the end seemed near, and the happiness of Heaven beamed upon her face. In the evening Don Bosco administered the last Sacraments to his dying mother. His grief was excessive and affected Margaret to such a degree that after the ceremony was over, and the last kiss and good-by given, she said tenderly to this favorite son: "Now, Giovanni mio, do not stay: you suffer, and it frets me."

He obeyed her, and kneeling in his own room where he could hear the murmur of prayers around her bedside, poured out his grief and tears at the foot of the crucifix. At three in the morning Joseph entered. Don Bosco arose. Joseph, with streaming tears, pointed upward, and the saintly apostle knew that his mother's soul had gone to its rest in the bosom of its Creator.

"He went at once," writes Father Bonetti, "to celebrate Holy Mass in the Chapel of Our Lady of Consolation, accompanied by young Joseph Buzzetti. There after offering the Holy Sacrifice in suffrage for her soul, he stopped to pray for a long time before the image of Our Lady. Among other things

he said to her: 'I and my children are now bereaved of our mother. O be thou for the time to come in a special manner my Mother and theirs also.'"

The funeral was plain, as Margaret had desired: her beloved Poverty was her attendant to the last, and bent over her dead form with a smile, for "her only gown was on her in the coffin." Many ecclesiastics were present, and all the members of the three Salesian houses of Turin followed their "Mother Margaret" to the grave.

Father Bonetti describes the scene. "The funeral was modest but impressive. A solemn Mass was celebrated in the Church of the Oratory, and the boys offered a General Communion for the repose of the soul of their great benefactress and mother. All then escorted the bier to the Parish Church, and the singing of the Miserere was accompanied by the plaintive strains of our band. The cortege was so orderly and edifying that several affirmed they had never assisted at such an affecting funeral."

Margaret Bosco's age was only fifty-eight; in ten years she had fulfilled the sacred mission to which she had been called by the Divine Heart of Jesus. "Suffer the little children to come unto me," had met with an ardent and persevering response from her great heart. The stories told of her sweetness and charity and sacrifice are multitudinous, all permeated with the deep affection of the narrators. Her prudence and management always forestalled the desires of Don Bosco, and many were trained by her to the various employments of the house. As the Society grew, these places were filled by boys who, not called to the priesthood, yet would not leave Don Bosco, but remained as coadjutor Brethren to serve the others and supply the temporal wants of the great household.

Plan of Studies. Some Remarkable Pupils of Don Bosco

The following brief sketch of Don Bosco's plan of studies drawn by one of his pupils is of interest. "On leaving the primary school the boys attended a professional school of arts and trades, or went through a secondary course of literary and scientific instruction in the Salesian institutions. Each pupil was guided to a choice of his studies in accordance with his inclinations.

"Don Bosco established agricultural schools in the country as well as industrial schools in towns; thus his work was universal. He observed with particular care the aptitude of his pupils; the orphanages were like nurseries, from which he yearly transplanted the best saplings to better ground. From the primary school these pupils passed to a college or gymnasium of classical instruction; and again, when there were vacancies, into the large seminaries. He endeavored to assist without forcing vocations, and he knew how to draw forth natural gifts. His observation and influence in this way were perhaps among the most remarkable of his faculties."

"The educative system of Don Bosco," writes the Director of a Government Normal School, "is modelled upon the gentleness of Saint Francis of Sales - the preventive system. In every case he endeavored to hinder the entrance of evil amongst the young by kindly treatment and constant watchfulness. Games, music, etc., were for him efficacious means for securing good order, cultivating virtue and preserving health By his marvellous natural gifts in the guidance of the young, by his perseverance, by the incredible practical results he obtained, he has become

immortal, and not without reason is he called a world-wide miraculous teacher."

Among the pupils of Don Bosco there were some who attained in their early years to remarkable sanctity. The biographies of several of these lovers of Jesus, who died young, were written by Don Bosco himself in picturesque and touching detail. There was Michael Magone, thirteen years of age, whom Don Bosco, while waiting an hour at Carmagnola for the Turin train, had found ruling in the street as a general a large band of boys. After a little friendly conversation with the Apostle of Youth, begun with a good deal of bravado, Magone confessed shamefacedly that he would like to be a priest. This was the boy for Don Bosco. In a few days he was installed in the Oratory. From that day, diligent and serious, he made still more rapid strides in virtue than he did in his studies. His horror of sin was intense, and his burning love of the Blessed Sacrament led him to spend hours at the foot of the altar. If Magone had lived he would have become one of the most eminent among the Italian clergy.

A record of his dying moments from the pen of Don Bosco will move and instruct my readers as it has moved and instructed me:

"Suddenly he said, 'Stay with me, Father.'

"'Be sure,' I said, 'I shall not leave you until you are with our Saviour in Heaven; but as you are going to leave this world, would you not like to say farewell to your mother?"

"'I do not like to give her such pain.'

"'But you will send her a message, at least?'

"'Yes, Father; ask her to pardon all the sorrow and trouble I caused her during my life; tell her I repent bitterly, that I love her very much; she must be brave, and I shall wait for her in Heaven.'

"At these words those present could not restrain their tears. I suppressed mine as well as I could, and asked him a few questions now and then.

"What shall I say to your companions?"

"'Tell them always to make good confessions.'

"'Which of the actions of your life gives you now most pleasure?'

"'The remembrance of even the little I have done in honor of the Blessed Virgin. O Mary, Mother of God, how happy it is to die your servant! Yet, Father, one thought troubles me. When my soul separates from my body, and enters the eternal kingdom, what shall I do?

"'Do not be afraid', I answered, 'the Blessed Virgin will accompany you before the Sovereign Judge; leave all to her. But before you go I will give you a message.' "'Yes, Father.'

"'When you see the Blessed Mother of our Saviour in paradise, present humble, respectful greetings from all here. Ask her to bless us and take us under her powerful protection, that not one of us, nor those whom Providence will send to our Oratories, may be lost.'

"'I will, Father.'"

How simple and beautiful the faith of both!

Little Camillus Gavio was with them only a few months when he was called to be a companion of the angels; yet in that brief period he left an ineffaceable memory of his holiness. So remarkable was his talent for painting and sculpture, that the Turin government had decided that he should continue his artistic studies at the expense of the State.

Don Bosco gave exquisite sketches of several other young lives, which I hope will some day be done into choice English by one of their Salesian descendants as the Life of Dominic Savio has already been rendered, the little fifteen year boy who was another Saint Aloysius. Among these are "Young Louis Comollo," "Some Salesian Contemporaries," "Young Francis Besucco, or the Little Shepherd of the Alps," and "Mary of the Angels, a Carmelite Nun." Above them all, however the holiness of young Dominic Savio shines like a star. He was born at Chieri, April 2, 1842, and died at Mondonio, March 9, 1857. In October 1864, Don Bosco first met him and seeing in a brief time the beauty of his soul he took him to Turin as one of his chosen boys. Upon the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 he formed an association in honor of Mary Immaculate and drew up a rule for its members, the chief maxim of which was "Serve ye the Lord with joy." He used to say: "He who seeks before all things the will of God is on the road to sanctity." This innocent and zealous youth was favored with many supernatural communications from God. Don Bosco describes a wonderful vision he had of the return of England to the Catholic faith; it was only a little later that Pius IX established the Catholic hierarchy in England. When Heaven was spoken of he would faint away in his companions' arms. After Dominic's death many extraordinary favors were obtained through his prayers; ten of these supernatural graces have been related by Don Bosco. The Cause of his Beatification was introduced on February 11, 1914.

Interior Life of Don Bosco. His Devotion to Mary, Help of Christians

Would it were possible to supplement the large details of his life of stupendous activities for the glory of God, with a companion picture of Don Bosco's interior life, his ways of prayer, his gradual ascent to that continual and intimate union with God ever present in the soul, which alone can effect great works.

Whence came Don Bosco's marvelous achievements? people asked. Some of them sprung up like exhalations. How did he bring about those profound and multitudinous transformations of souls from vice to rare and permanent virtue? And the proved miraculous effects of his prayers, the words of prophecy of which they saw the fulfillment with their own eyes - more than all, the heroic fortitude, even joy, with which he bore the most cruel persecutions and reverses, from individuals of low and high degree, from ecclesiastics, from governments, coming out unscathed with supernatural winnings and human successes and victories more prodigious than ever - what was the secret, the mystery of it all?

So close to the invisible world from childhood, the favored disciple of Mary, Seat of Wisdom, who unfolded to him secrets of the future, we may conjecture that God revealed Himself to that chaste soul - the indwelling of the Adorable Trinity was made manifest to his spiritual sight, the Divine Generation of the Word, the Procession of the Holy Ghost, that immanent life of infinite Being which is ever going on in

the pure soul after Baptism, though, alas! material things obscure the vision.

His blessed patron, Saint Francis of Sales, during the ceremonies of his consecration as Bishop, beheld "the most Adorable Trinity imprinting inwardly on his soul those marks which the Bishops were making outwardly on his person." And how many saints have been privileged with the continual loving presence of the Sacred Humanity of our Saviour in the secret abysses of their soul, to instruct, guide and illumine them in the intricate and lofty ways of perfection! Blessed Margaret Mary, the lowly Visitation nun, beheld this interior vision continually. We may be sure that God granted these and other graces of a sublime order to this "faithful servant of His Divine Majesty," Don Bosco, so profoundly humble, and so skillful in hiding "the secrets of the King."

The desire to be led into this wonderful veiled world of his soul's life with God, drew me to consult the Salesian Fathers in the hope that they might furnish me either in print or in manuscript, some records which his alter ego, Don Rua, his saintly successor in the government of the Society, and other disciples must have made during those hours of sacred intimacy which saints hold with one another and which help to make life an anticipated heaven. My reward was a beautiful and comprehensive letter, a multum in parvo, which casts such an illumination upon Don Bosco's life that it will edify and interest those who appreciate the work of grace in a soul.

"Dear Sister: The interior life of our founder, in all the booklets about him, as far as I can see, has not been touched upon, because exterior deeds are what impress the world. Yet these marvelous feats of Don Bosco would

absolutely have been unattainable had it not been for the divine fire that burnt in his simple heart.

"Don Bosco is remarkable for three characteristics: first, his love for the Holy Eucharist and his constant endeavor to preach and write about frequent and even daily Communion on the part of the children. In this he anticipated years before the decree of the late Pope Pius X on 'Frequent and Daily Communion.'

"The second ideal of Don Bosco was 'to go to Jesus through Mary.' And thus Mary, Help of Christians, became his polar star, his guide, his protectress, his inspiration, and his all-help in all his trials and vicissitudes. In his dying words, he said to Don Rua: 'Spread with all your might the devotion to Our Lady, Help of Christians.'

"The third principle that guided all Don Bosco's steps was blind obedience to the See of Rome, to the Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ. He often said that we must accept all his utterances as commands coming from the lips of Jesus Himself. Don Bosco knew the value of discipline, of authority, hence his submission in all things to the Holy Father. And he was never done inculcating to his children love and gratitude to the Vicar of Christ. These are the three salient notes in Don Bosco's interior and exterior life.

"He was besides very jovial, witty, magnetic. He had an iron will, once he made up his mind to do something which was for the greater glory of God. I am simply giving a few hints, and I trust and pray that your lecture will be a success. Pray for me and believe me,

"Yours sincerely in Xt.,
Frederick Barni, S. S. F. S."

Mary, Help of Christians, is then the polar star of the children, of the great triple army of conquest, the Salesian Fathers, the Salesian Sisters and the Salesian Co-operators throughout the world. It was she who ushered Don Bosco into the world during the Octave of her glorious Assumption; to her he prayed as a child in the fields at Becchi; and there she deigned to appear to her little elite and open to him the veil of the future. From that moment his faith in her protection and intercession was ever strong, constant, boundless; and to her he ascribed all his progress in virtue and the success of his works.

Three events in Church history have glorified this beautiful and alluring title of Mary. Its origin dates back to 1571, when Mahometanism was turned away from its threatened invasion of all Christendom by the Christian fleet in the gulf of Lepanto, under the banner Viva Maria. Saint Pius V, who saw in spirit the astounding victory, moved by a profound feeling of gratitude added to the Litany of Our Lady the invocation, Auxilium Christianorum, Help of Christians, pray for us. In 1683, Sobieski, the heroic Pole, under the standard of Mary, again thrust back the Turkish horde and a second time saved the West to Christianity. The great Confraternity of Our Lady, Help of Christians, was the lasting memorial of thanks to Mary for his signal triumph. Finally, the renowned papal prisoner of Napoleon, Pius VII, having recovered his liberty and entered Rome amid rejoicings on May 24, 1814, fulfilled a vow he had made to consecrate to Our Lady, Help of Christians, the day of his restoration to the throne of Peter.

The New Basilica. Don Bosco a Thaumaturgus

The devotion to Mary, Help of Christians, had become a favorite one in Turin. Don Bosco, seeing that the chapel of Saint Francis de Sales at Valdocco could no longer accommodate the large congregations that flocked there, resolved to erect a noble basilica to Our Lady under this title. As usual, his design was pronounced foolish and impossible of execution. But when Pius IX sent the Apostle of Youth his blessing and a purse of five hundred francs as the first contribution to the stately shrine, the state of affairs changed. Generous offerings were made, especially by Prince Amadeus of Savoy, always a friend of the Salesians: he it was who laid the cornerstone of the new edifice on April 27, 1865. After Don Bosco had paid for the grounds, eight cents remained in his hands. Fearless of results, so magnanimous was his trust in God, he hired laborers and the work went on rapidly. But these poor men had to support their families and must have money.

He remembered a sick lady who had declared her readiness to make any sacrifice to recover her health. He accordingly visited her, and after the usual commonplaces she pressed him earnestly on the subject of her cure. Don Bosco ordered a novena to Our Lady, Help of Christians - the Pater, Ave Maria, Gloria and Salve Regina - in which he promised to unite. An offering to the new church was to be the willing testimony of her gratitude. On the eighth day he again called with some anxiety upon the invalid. The servant, on opening the door, exclaimed: "Why, Father, have you not heard? Madame is cured; she has been out twice." The mistress came to Don Bosco at once, joyous and well; and

handing him one thousand francs, just the sum he needed, she said smilingly: "The first gift but not the last."

Don Bosco's reputation as a thaumaturgus began to grow. Spiritual maladies of the most inveterate kind had yielded for years to the medicinal balm of his gentle treatment. And now corporal cures were being effected at his word, in answer to his prayer. The walls of his great basilica could tell a whole history of wonders that were wrought into all parts of the stately structure, mosaics of light, of charity, visible to Mary and the angels who watch around the sacred altar. Don Bosco, the humble, the lowly-hearted peasant, still more amid divine favors and caresses than amid the earthly honors often lavished upon him, regarded them as utterly beyond his merits and inflicted upon himself more severe penances, sought a more complete death to self and courted humiliations with a deeper joy and a more solid conviction of his nothingness.

One day he trembled from head to foot with emotion as he beheld a dumb and paralytic child, Josephine Longhi, brought to him by her mother, suddenly walk and talk at his bidding. Count Giletta, formerly a deputy, now debating as to a religious vocation, was awaiting his turn to see Don Bosco. As the sorrowing mother bore the afflicted child into the priest's ante-chamber, he arose, and going to her, yielded up his place and took the lowest rank in the line of petitioners. Then he prayed: "O Mary, Help of Christians, if thou healest this child it shall be unto me a sign of God's will." The child came out from Don Bosco's presence leaping and laughing. "Don Bosco has cured me," she said, while all flocked around to caress her. Upon witnessing this extraordinary effect of sanctity, Count Giletta no longer hesitated but at once offered himself to Don Bosco and lived and died holily in the Salesian Order. And later Josephine became a devout Salesian Sister.

I must relate one more marvel, among many which were wrought in bringing the new church to completion, for it was three years in building. It happened on November 16, 1866. Four thousand francs were required that evening and Don Bosco had not one centime. Don Rua and others made a circuit of the country round in the morning; they returned with only one thousand francs, declaring that to spend any more time in begging was useless. "Never mind," said Don Bosco, "let us go to dinner."

The repast over, he took his hat and started for a walk, pursuing his way somewhat at random. As he was passing a handsome mansion quite unfamiliar to him, a liveried servant appeared at the door and begged him to come in. Don Bosco complied and was conducted into the presence of a middle-aged man, an apparent paralytic.

"Ah, Father," said the invalid, "I have been in bed three years and the physicians pronounce my case hopeless. If you will relieve me your works will gain."

"Really? Why, that is admirable. My works are in urgent need this evening of three thousand francs."

"If it were only three hundred! But three thousand francs!"

"Never mind; let it go," answered the priest, and after a few casual remarks he arose to depart.

"Father, I will try to get you three thousand francs before the end of the year."

"At the end of the year? But I want the money tonight."

"I shall have to send to the bank. It requires formality."

"Go to the bank yourself, sir."

"You are joking, Father. Haven't I told you I have been lying in this bed for three years?"

"Nothing is impossible to God, Let us appeal to Mary." And Don Bosco ordered that the whole household should be called, thirty in number.

Struck with wonder, they knelt around the bed and answered Don Bosco's prayers with unwonted fervor.

"Now," said the priest as they rose from prayer, "go and dress your master." Astounded and incredulous the servants demurred.

"Don Bosco must be obeyed," commanded the sick man.

The doctor now suddenly appeared upon the scene and forbade his patient to stir. But the sartorial work progressed rapidly, and soon the paralytic was walking across the room.

"My carriage at once!" he demanded; and while waiting he partook of a hearty meal. He then drove to the bank with Don Bosco, where he handed him the three thousand francs with a gratitude he could not express. "I am wholly recovered," he repeated again and again. And his offering was followed by many other contributions to Don Bosco's enterprises, especially to the Church of Our Lady.

The solemn dedication of the basilica to Mary, Help of Christians, took place on June 19, 1868, the festivities lasting a week, as Pius IX had granted a plenary indulgence to those who attended. Since that day this splendid shrine has been a sanctuary of pilgrimage and the walls are covered with votive offerings.

Don Bosco's Literary Works. Printing Plant. The Salesian Bulletin

I have said that Don Bosco wrote over a hundred books - no one ever believed more devoutly than he in the apostolate of the press. The spoken word first, in season and out of season. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace!" was verified daily in his life, as well as in the lives of all his followers in the ways of Saint Francis of Sales. But after that and the cares, spiritual and temporal, of his beloved family had been attended to, every leisure moment was given to writing or to thought and conversation preparatory to it.

Oliver Wendell Holmes was one day talking with a few friends and an enchanted hour slipped by in listening to his oracles of wisdom and experience drawn from the study of his fellow-men. One of his hearers said with regret: "Dr. Holmes, would that all you have said to us were in print, that it might benefit thousands!" "Perhaps it will be some day," answered the doctor laughing; "I have a way of roughing out my thoughts to my friends before they appear before the public eye." Don Bosco had a goodly share of that wisdom, so that his leisure hours of converse, as well as his hours of prayer, contributed generously to his written page, and swelled the number of his books almost to miracle.

And, besides, Don Bosco never wasted time. Saint Liguori, whose voluminous works are the treasure of the Church, made a vow which might well frighten the most saintly, never to waste a minute of time; and I have often thought that vow was like the fiery chariot of Elias, which bore his soul up to heaven to witness the "Glories" of divine love, and then, returning to earth, sped him over its vast spaces

scattering his pages - so many sparks of fire to kindle heavenly love in the hearts of men. I really believe if we could enter into the secret world of Don Bosco's life in God, we should find that vow or its equivalent there written in the Heart of Jesus; for he, too, scattered his burning pages over the world in miraculous haste, and number, and spiritual variety.

He did not aim at the world's admiration in his choice of word and phrase. He looked to God for the thought and the power, and then wrote in simple, strong, concise language his gospel message to the young; for to them his eyes were always directed; to create the temple of God in their souls was his one imperious and dominating motive. Don Bosco had the gift of genius which might have put him on a par with the finest prose writers of Italy, had literature been his ambition. But all his beloved classics, in collegiate days so profoundly studied, so carefully imitated, were now disregarded, art for art's sake spurned, before the world's crying need of instruction and his own powerful convictions, fairly burning themselves into the paper.

I am going to introduce a paragraph by one of his own devoted students which, I think, will lend a charm to the pleasant topic under discussion. How beautiful the picture of the saintly and learned theologian waiting on his mother's words for suggestion and correction in matters so weighty!

"I feel quite affected when I think of those happy years during which our beloved Father often related the trouble he took in his youth to study the composition of flowery, figurative rhetoric; and his difficulties later - the struggle and effort to write in the plain, simple style, always faultless, which makes his ideas and writings charming. I remember what he told us of his 'Ecclesiastical History,' and his venerable mother, who, though endowed with great

judgment, was ignorant of literature. Wishing to make his 'History' intelligible to all, he got her to read it; then he retouched and corrected it according to her advice. Sometimes, regardless of fatigue, he re-wrote entire chapters. His wish was, without despising art in its sober beauty, to be fully understood. His works may be classed under four heads: works of piety, works of religious discussion, narratives for youth and course of classics."

Chief among his writings are "Sacred History;" "Ecclesiastical History," just referred to, a voluminous work of research, full of charm and interest, in twenty volumes from one hundred to two hundred and fifty pages each; and his "History of Italy," comprising upwards of five hundred pages, "a clear, concise, judicious statement of events." He assures the reader that he has not written one phrase without collating it with accredited historians. This book was highly praised by the renowned Tommaseo. The Minister of Public Instruction found it so estimable that he adopted it in the public schools and rewarded the author with a thousand francs. "The Catholic Church and the Hierarchy," "The Catholic in the World," and many other volumes of a similar nature, are replete with instruction, convincing by their clear, conclusive logic, and practical in the extreme.

Don Bosco's system in education was preventive rather than repressive, or it would not have attained to such phenomenal success. Here is his secret, laid down in his rule: "Frequent confession, frequent Communion, daily Mass; these are the pillars which must support the whole edifice of education." The confessional was an educative power with Don Bosco which can hardly be conceived; he spent long hours of day and night in the church or at the end of the homely Valdocco corridor, one arm generally around the boy penitent to encourage him. Daily Communion was with him the open door to every heavenly virtue, and through it he

led his disciples and made them saints. And the holy Sacrifice of the Mass! Who that beheld his reverence, his absorption in God, his rapt countenance, as he offered the Divine Victim for his little waifs, all intent upon the sacred function, could ever forget it? And therefore these three golden pillars form the recurrent theme of his most ardent exhortations by the pen as by the spoken word. He inculcated these lessons by every form of literature - by graphic pictures of the love of Jesus, doing away with all fear and distrust.

"Arithmetic Made Easy" is only one of many titles that have a pleasant sound for students' ears, for his pen was ever "a scrivener that writeth swiftly" and lovingly to ease their labors. With his stories for youth, his biographies and his religious and moral fiction, our readers have already made acquaintance; and he was no less expert in the dramatic art, having published several excellent plays for public performance by his boys.

From primer class to professor's diploma, religion was the spirit that dominated every study in Don Bosco's curricula. Popular treatises on science which ignore the Creator of all things and present purely material ideas to the young, were superseded by carefully prepared works which elevated the mind and trained the heart while teaching the marvels of creation. Mythology he abhorred. "Shame on mythology!" - these are his strong words: "Nature in its beauty, life in its reality, history in its immortal pages, supply an ample fund of examples and comparisons, provided the professor takes some personal trouble."

In making humanists or scholars his principle was to make good Christians. He would have the De Officiis of Saint Ambrose by the side of Cicero's De Officiis; and Saint Cyprian's rhetoric a companion to Pro Archia and Pro

Marcello. "All my life," he wrote in his late years, "I have struggled against the error of bringing up young Christians as pagans; with this object I have undertaken double publication; that of some of the profane classics most used in the schools, revised and corrected, and of Christian classics. Among the latter I selected those written in concise, elegant style, with pure, holy doctrine, which corrects and weakens the naturalism freely permeating the first. To restore Christian authors to their place, to make pagan authors as harmless as possible, are the ends I have had in view in all the works I have undertaken."

And Don Bosco encouraged literary talent wherever he found it, so that from his schools emanated celebrities in the various departments of literature: His Eminence, Cardinal Cagliero, the Apostle of Patagonia, Don Rua, Don Cerruti, Don Durando and numbers of other distinguished doctors have written on theological and moral subjects; and the other careers of life are similarly represented by authors of style and erudition.

The need of economy in publishing his works became apparent, and Valdocco early had an extensive printing plant of its own; from the manufacture of paper and types to the perfection of binding and gilding, everything necessary to the art of book-making was supplied, and highly skilled work accomplished within its walls by the eager and indefatigable young mechanics and printers. Latin, French and Italian publications were brought out in exquisite taste under Don Bosco's eye and prudent direction, and the printing industry became a lucrative source of income.

Although for years Don Bosco had projected a Salesian periodical he was unable to compass his desire until 1878, when the Salesian Bulletin, a monthly magazine, was launched upon the world to be a mighty power for good. The

Annals of the Society in pleasing detail are to be found within its pages - of untold value for records of sanctity and heroic achievement in all parts of the world. The Salesian Bulletin, still issued from Valdocco, Turin, is now published monthly in nine languages: Italian, English, French, Spanish, German, Polish, Portuguese, Hungarian and Slavonic, comprising a total of three hundred and fifty thousand copies.

Its illustrations are attractive and its emblems full of suggestiveness. Its simple cover of paper is the object of special care in design and drawing to the young Salesian artists of Turin, and presents a beautiful religious study. Amid a multitude of details, Mary, Help of Christians, Saint Francis of Sales and the Venerable Don Bosco are prominent figures; and the soul-cry of the Order gleams upon its scroll through the emblems of study, art and labor: Give me souls: takeaway everything else.

The Salesian Schools. Don Bosco Persecuted. Testimonials of Government Officials

In 1858 Don Bosco had visited Rome and laid all his projects for his Oratory of Saint Francis of Sales before Pope Pius IX, who held him in the highest esteem and willingly conferred upon him many privileges. The progress of the Salesian Institutions of Turin had now become assured, and Don Bosco was constantly in receipt of applications from bishops near and far. His great industrial schools, comprising all the trades and some of the arts, had obtained a national repute. There were to be found among his artisans, shoemakers, tailors, joiners, blacksmiths, plumbers and printers. "The Salesian Professional Schools are veritable training-grounds of conscience and character, and at the same time excellent schools supplied with all that is best in modern inventions of tools and machinery, so that nothing may be wanting to the pupils in that progress of which modern industry is so justly proud."

We have already described, although very imperfectly, Don Bosco's comprehensive system of education and its noble results. Artists, too, and architects were discovered among these waifs, and their talents developed. Music, the first, the most beloved, and the most universal of the arts, was one of the great factors of Don Bosco in the renewal and enlightenment of these young souls. Himself a musician with an insuperable devotion to the sacred harmonies of the Church, he made choral singing, from the first, a beautiful and attractive feature of the Oratory: all were able to sing, and some superb voices were found among these minstrels of the South, so that with training they became leaders in the liturgical functions. Talent for instrumental music, too,

the natural heritage of the Italian, was fostered, and a band was a sine qua non of every Oratory.

The war of 1859 caused Don Bosco much trouble and anxiety. Known to be a correspondent of Pius IX - whose answer to his own letter of condolence he had printed - and of Cardinal Antonelli and Archbishop Franzoni, he was denounced as a conspirator, and his Institute condemned as a hotbed of reactionary politics. Subjected by the government to an insidious and insulting inspection of his schools, his dignity and firmness under the ordeal rose to admiration. And still more magnificent was his attitude when he appeared before Count de Cavour, president of the council, and Farini, minister of the interior, to repel the charges against him and to hand over to them the hundreds of poor boys of his Oratories to be a burden on the state. He openly censured the government agents, and his arguments in defense of the Church, of the Pope, and of his own line of conduct, were unanswerable.

"I have lived twenty years in Turin and have written, spoken and acted openly; I defy anyone to quote a line, a word, an action, which deserves censure from the government. If otherwise, let proof be given: then, if guilty, I submit to punishment; but, if innocent, let me be permitted to continue my labors without annoyance." Count de Cavour, who had listened with respect, for he was friendly to Don Bosco, assured him in the end that his work would be left unmolested, but exhorted him to prudence in those trying times, and as the priest retired both ministers rose and shook hands with him. Many orphans made by the battles of Magenta and Solferino found shelter in the Oratory, where they were received with open arms.

The Government Deputy Ellero writes: "Scarcely any reading has so profoundly impressed me as that of the few notes left

by Don Bosco on the subject of education..... notes which owe their immense value to the fact that their author was not an idealistic dreamer, but rather an idealist full of reality, the animating spirit of a marvellous human work which few thoroughly understood, and in regard to whom, that impartial and generous spirit Cesare Lombroso had no hesitation in assigning one of the first places among the few who have attempted, initiated, and efficaciously evolved a national system of correction and rehabilitation." Another testimonial of profound appreciation is from the pen of Count Conestabile, and presents the apostolic Father and teacher in all the charm of daily life:

"One day when I went to visit Don Bosco I found him at his desk reading a paper on which several names were written. 'Here,' he remarked, are some of my little rogues, whose conduct is not satisfactory.' At that time I was but imperfectly acquainted with Don Bosco's methods, and I asked him if he had any punishment in reserve for those naughty boys.

"'None at all, he replied, 'but this is what I am going to do. This one, for instance (pointing to one of the names), is the worst little rascal, though he has an excellent heart. I will go to him during the time of recreation and ask after his health; and he, doubtless, will answer that it is excellent. Then you are quite satisfied with yourself, my boy? I shall say. At first he will be somewhat surprised, then he will cast down his eyes and look ashamed. In an affectionate tone I shall insist: But, my child, something is wrong; if your body is in health, perhaps your mind is not at peace. Is it long since you were at Confession? In a few minutes the boy will be ready to confess his fault; and I am almost sure I shall have no more complaints of him.'

"I listened in silence, conquered by the charm and the sweetness of these apostolic words. I had discovered the secret of the great works this humble priest had successfully accomplished. Many times since, when the sight of the evils of our time filled my heart with bitter sadness, that priestly voice came back to me and gave me hope for the future of a society to whom God sends such reformers."

Vocations Multiply. Organization of the Salesian Society. Mary Mazzarello

From the year 1846, when four of Don Bosco's pupils had become divinity students, to 1865, what progress! A visitor speaking of one of the boarding schools of four hundred pupils, with its complete course of classical studies, adds: "About a fourth of these scholars enter the Salesian Congregation or are ordained." The first priest from the schools was ordained in 1857 - a waif who had fled almost a wreck from cruel and inhuman parents to the shelter of Don Bosco's fatherly heart. His talents were found so extraordinary and combined with such natural energy, love of study and aspiration after holiness of life, that Don Bosco gave every facility to his laudable ambitions, became his director, instructor and father; and his labor of love was well rewarded, for eventually his protege became one of the most distinguished and saintly of the Turin clergy.

As years elapsed and vocations multiplied, Don Bosco, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, saw a society of priests shaping itself almost unconsciously under his very eyes into a sacerdotal phalanx destined to make war upon sin and worldliness, to conquer Christ's enemies, wrest from them their young captives, and bring thousands of them to fight under His divine standard. For the youthful Levites would not leave the dear Father and apostle who had saved them, who had led their footsteps into this new world of spiritual beauty, of glory, of undreamed-of possibilities of good; by his side they would labor, would spend the God-given

talents he had discovered and brought to light, would give their lives with daily increasing ardor to the great apostolate in which he had already achieved such prodigies of moral change.

And the pencil of the Holy Ghost was summoned to write the laws of this new gathering of priests. The spirit of Saint Francis of Sales, always the guiding spirit of Don Bosco, was evoked - the spirit of love, of sweetness, of strength, which characterized that most humble and most beloved of saints and missionaries - to drench this new offspring of his and make each of them another Sales to preach and illustrate by example that Christ's Gospel is one of love.

Through all these years, Don Bosco's ideal of organized spiritual activity grew continually; his thought and experience were always on the alert for improvement in details, and, humble to the heart's core, he was ever ready to seek the counsels of his early confreres, especially of Don Michele Rua, his first priestly conquest of Valdocco for the Order of Saint Francis of Sales, of whom he said: "Observe and study Don Rua, for he is a saint." So that at last a compact body of Salesian rules "of wonderful wisdom, discretion and sweetness," emanated from the hands of the saintly founder - rules tried seven times in the fiery crucible of loving and heroic obedience by his ardent followers - rules which planted the roots of sanctity deep in the vital recesses of the soul, later to flourish and spread its branches over the whole world laden with fruit for the healing of the nations.

Hardly any story of the formation of a religious order could be more interesting, touching, thrilling in its details; and to indulge in the cumulative evidence of detail, of anecdote, of conversations, is the momentary temptation of any author who would write of Don Bosco. But space limits me; and my readers may well await, in this as in all the other

circumstances of this mysterious life, the filial revelations of Father Lemoyne in his wonderful fifteen-volume biography of the Apostle of Turin. Don Bosco was truly living two lives - more in the invisible world of spirit than in the world of superhuman activities in which, however, he seemed always plunged; seemed, I say, for it was a divine power that guided them all, and though he was not exempt from the most cruel trials yet was he, I may truly say, care-free in his utter infantine dependence on God.

And, therefore, as in ever increasing numbers these young, strong-souled priests and trained professors of his own making, relinquished every earthly ambition and sought to toil from the first hour of the day in this new vineyard of the Lord, so with ever-widening zeal did Don Bosco respond to the calls from all Italy for colleges and complete Oratories. The three houses of Turin overflowed to meet the demands, and from 1863 on, the Institute became permanently established in Mirabello, Monferrato, Alassio, Mogliano, Randazzo in Sicily, Varese, Val Salice and at Trent in the Tyrol.

But Our Lady, Help of Christians, was preparing afar off in the valley of Mornese a great surprise for Don Bosco - the realization of a dream of long years - of a noble aspiration which his mother's great heart had shared and fostered with profound interest. This was to establish institutions similar to those of the Oratory for poor little girls whom Margaret had seen with sorrow roaming the streets without a shelter. Mary Mazzarello, an Alpine girl, had grown up in the valley a model of angelic innocence, of virtuous labor and charitable zeal, and her beautiful influence was paramount over many of the young girls of the village. She was sixteen years of age when Don Pestorino, the pious Curé determined to form of those elect souls a Congregation dedicated to Mary Immaculate. The rules were easy: prayer and good works

were enjoined, but the members were left unconstrained as to their ordinary duties of life. Mary, in her fervor wishing to do more, assembled the little girls of the village in her own home, and instructed them in religious doctrine; but, not long after, her generous heart prompted her to hire a work-room where she taught them all kinds of sewing, in which she was an expert.

Marvelous reports of Don Bosco and his Society of Saint Francis of Sales, having come to the ears of Don Pestorino, he conceived an ardent desire to become a member, and to affiliate, if possible, his little Mornese Congregation to the great Salesian Society, then twenty-five years in existence. Later, he visited Don Bosco who welcomed him into the Society with joy; and he became one of the most active and zealous Fathers. The holy apostle received with equal happiness Mary Mazzarello and her companions, modifying the rules of the Congregation, changing its name to Mary, Help of Christians, and placing it on a par with the Salesian Institute. What the latter was for boys the Salesian Sisters became for girls. Mary was chosen Superior, and on August 5, 1872, the Feast of Our Lady of the Snows, she and her sisters with ineffable joy received the religious habit from the Bishop of Acqui, and pronounced their sacred vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Their life was a duplicate of the early struggling years of Valdocco, but there was not a murmur; and the work grew and was manifestly blessed by God, as were all the works entrusted to Don Bosco by His divine Providence.

Papal Approbation of the Rules and Constitutions. The Spirit of Saint Francis of Sales Dominates

April 3, 1874, was a day of benediction, a day of sacred and perpetual memorial to the sons of Don Bosco, for on that day Pope Pius IX solemnly approved the Rules and Constitutions which the founder, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, had framed for his Society of Saint Francis of Sales. The members who thus dedicate themselves to God are "to study to acquire Christian perfection; to devote their lives to works of charity, spiritual and temporal, especially among children and youth, and to the education of scholars. Destitute children are to receive the preference."

The Society is composed of priests, divinity students and lay students. The vows of chastity, obedience and poverty are the same as in other religious orders, except that the vow of poverty regards only the administration of property and does not prohibit its possession. The administration of patrimonies, benefices, or property of any kind is restricted to the Superior-General, who is elected for twelve years, and may be re-elected, but cannot hold the keys of administration unless the Pope confirms his election. The prefect, spiritual director, steward and three councillors are elected for six years. Each house has its rector, prefect, steward, catechist and councillors, and every foundation must have at least six Salesian members.

The first vows are binding only for three years, when final vows may be taken. As in other orders, the Society is bound only to those who have pronounced their final vows. The members celebrate Mass daily, or, if not priests, assist at the holy Sacrifice. A half-hour, at least, of morning mental prayer is required, with the recitation of five mysteries of the rosary, and spiritual reading for a stated time. Weekly confession, the Friday fast, and a day's retreat every month are prescribed, with an annual retreat of from six to ten days.

The Constitutions remark: "Salesians should take particular care even of trifles, and keep clothes, beds, and cells tidy. Holiness of life is the adornment of religious. Should necessity arise, heat, cold, hunger, thirst, hard work, and contempt from men must be courageously endured, if conductive to the glory of God, their own salvation or that of their neighbor."

Shortly after Pius IX by his bull of approbation, had confirmed the Salesian Order and brought it definitively into the great religious family of the Church, he set the seal of his solemn approval upon the Rules and Constitutions of the new Congregation of Mary, Help of Christians.

"This Institute is for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls," his Holiness declared to Don Bosco. "The good Master has again chosen you as His instrument; let us humbly thank Him and refer all to His grace. I am convinced that the Sisters of Mary, Help of Christians, will accomplish similar effects in the education of girls to those wrought by the Salesian Fathers and Brothers in the education of boys." And succeeding years have confirmed this prophecy of the saintly Pius IX.

Don Bosco confided to the Holy Father his solicitude in regard to the maintenance of both societies. "As to that, do

not hesitate," the Pope said, reassuringly; "if the work is to last the nuns must remain under your authority and that of your successors. They can work amalgamated with you, as the Sisters of Charity worked with Saint Vincent de Paul."

Don Rua, assistant to Don Bosco, was appointed prefect of the Society of Mary, Help of Christians; and the first Salesian house for girls was established under his direction about July, 1874. The progress of the Society, its wide expansion, was so astonishing that in ten years, 1884, more than thirty houses flourished in Italy, France and America. Wherever an Oratory for boys was founded the people called for a similar organization for girls. In the beginning Mary Mazzarello's nuns numbered only thirteen; when, in 1884, after incredible labors and sacrifices she died in the odor of sanctity, consumed with the love of God and zeal for the souls of His little ones, she left behind her carrying on the supernatural work she had initiated in Mornese valley more than two hundred and fifty nuns imbued with the apostolic spirit of the founder and of his glorious patron, Saint Francis of Sales.

The holy Bishop of Geneva has bequeathed to numbers of religious orders who serve holily the Church of God, his name and his spirit. His own creation, which he trained from the cradle of infancy, the Order of the Visitation, he so impregnated with his spirit, through his holy life, his oral instructions during many years, and his incomparable spiritual writings, especially the Constitutions and Directory he devised for his nuns, that the spirit of the Visitation is essentially one with his own, so much so that it has ever been deemed the distinctive mark of the Order. And the spirit of love and gentleness is the keystone of the Salesian Order; it is its strength, its raison d'etre, I might say; the golden-winged angel who, from its wide-scattered missions, bears thousands of souls to the shining land.

Unkindness is the chief assistant to Satan in peopling the prisons of hell. Who knows what a terrible train of consequences may follow that act of unkindness? Anger lays hold of the victim, temptation, the unholy spirit of revenge, take possession of him. Unkindness hinders prayer, creates distrust of God, and in cruelly flagellating the heart, steels it against its fellow-creatures. It may cast one into a slough of despond from which he shall never arise. Unkindness is a negative word; its sound has grown familiar to us, and we do not realize the world of misery that vocable shuts up in its unholy bounds.

But what if positive harshness and violence and contempt put stings and swords into the act? And how do you know what state of pain your victim is in already? The heart may be filled to bursting, the mind crushed under disappointment and misfortune. O, this is terrible, when a grown man or woman is its prey! What, then, is it to the child just entering on the career of life in a world filled to repletion with the riches and beauty and love of the Creator? A world where happiness with outstretched hands awaits every step of yours, eager to be led to the rough and thorny ways where toil and suffer the little helpless waifs and strays, those early pilgrims of sorrow, those shorn lambs of God, shorn of all human comfort, made old with misery ere life has half begun. Ah, does not your gentle heart see and know that they should be playing in the gardens of innocent pleasure, their minds expanding in homes of learning, their souls uplifted in temples of worship and holy peace?

Can you save one - can you save many - and have you not done it? Look abroad over our free, beautiful republic, rolling in affluence, its wealth distributed over the nations of the world, a land where pleasure and luxury run riot, - and where crime and poverty run riot, too, - and see dotting its great cities and its hillsides, prisons, workhouses, homes for

feeble-minded children, reformatories for boys and girls. Enter those repellent precincts and look about you upon the hapless ones whom the world has walled in from social communion with their fellows - study those young faces especially, and compare them with happy faces you know and love and surround with all the sweetness earth can give. Then if you have courage and love equal to it, question them. Ask men, ask women, ask girls and boys: "What brought you here?"

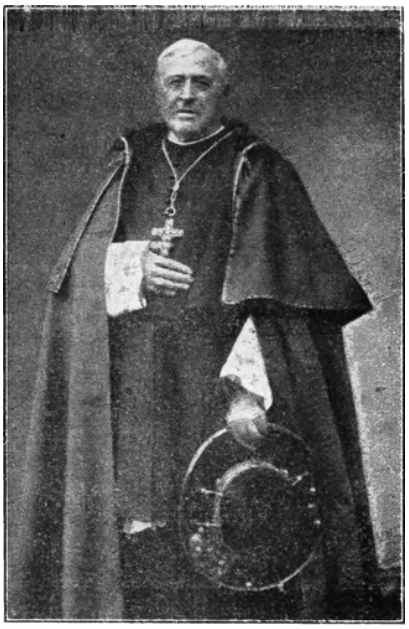
I venture to say that one-half the answers in low, bitter, conclusive tones will be "Unkindness." Do this and I may well suppress my meagre yet awe-inspiring knowledge. Your life-long lesson will be learned - an appalling one - as it was learned by the young priest of Turin, just ordained, and sinking into the depths of his great, Christ-like heart, all on fire with the love of the Redeemer and His little ones, brought forth supernatural deeds that parallel and perhaps surpass all that history has recorded of the achievements of a single man - "a miraculous man," as one of his own saintly disciples delights in calling Don Bosco.

And, therefore, this great Apostle and Father of Youth would have none of it. Unkindness should be banished from his homes like a serpent. His children should be conducted through ways of gentleness and love, hand in hand with prayer and virtue. His priests and brothers should be trained to the perfection of the spirit of their great titular patron and Doctor of the Church, and their souls daily fed on his sublime and sweetly practical doctrines. Philothea, the Treatise on the Love of God, the Conferences and Controversies, the Spirit of Saint Francis of Sales, the heavenly Sermons and Letters - with what love and devotion and masterly skill did Don Bosco study this treasured library of the Church! And how penetrating and replete with divine unction were his words as he discoursed to his beloved

disciples in his own beautiful style of Saint Francis' luminous teachings on prayer, abandonment to the will of God, and the perfect practice of the religious virtues, all comprised in celestial love!

No harsh note from Salesian lyre is heard!
His spell is all of sweetness; yet the strong,
Clear message rings like ancient prophet's word;
Anon, to his full gaze as mysteries throng
Its breathings are the loved Disciple's own;
And now it rises like the ecstatic song
Of some grand seraph veiled before the Throne!

First Foreign Mission. The Argentine Republic. Don Cagliero



It is pleasant to know that the venerable Don Bosco received one of the earliest and most pressing applications for his Salesian Fathers from our own Cardinal McCloskey, the learned, eloquent and saintly Archbishop of New York from 1864 to 1885. The Italians, yearly increasing by immigration, became a cause of grave concern to His Eminence, especially the youthful contingent, whom he saw in danger of losing the faith of their fathers; and the entrance of the Society of Saint Francis of Sales into his diocese, he believed, would be the solution of his difficulties. But, ardently as Don Bosco desired the foundation, he could ill spare his priests as yet from his institutions in and near Turin. He could only beg the American Cardinal to wait.

Pius IX was fully aware of the pressing demands of the bishops in the various countries; for Don Bosco's devotion to the Vicar of Christ led him frequently to Rome to lay before his Holiness, like a docile child, his plans and inspirations, which were welcomed with the magnanimous heart of a father, considered at leisure, and finally, with added lights and counsels, sealed and put into operation with his sanction and blessing. The holy Pontiff had, indeed, a special, Christ-like love for children; and the privations and sorrows of the young had entered into his earliest priestly experience as director of the orphan asylum, Tata Giovanni,

in Rome; who, then, could wonder at his affectionate support of Don Bosco in his enterprises for youth?

The first Salesian house outside of Italy was opened at Nice in 1875. This foundation had been revealed to Don Bosco; so that when, on a visit three years after to the new Oratory, the children were brought to welcome him at the entrance to the grounds, he said to the rector, Don Perrot: "I recognize this place which I have seen in a dream; and even the voice of the child singing is the same I heard in my dream. Praise to Our Lady, Help of Christians!"

But now there was question of a wider Salesian separation - the urgent entreaties from overseas must be heeded. Africa, Australia, India, America - which should it be? Pius IX decided. As a young priest, Pope Leo XII in 1823 had appointed him auditor of the Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Muzi, to Chili; and there El Padre Giovanni Mastai, the loving and beloved, had left a portion of his great heart. He had traveled through broad areas inhabited only by savage tribes; he had witnessed the ignorance and great decay of morality caused by revolutions and civil wars among the civilized Christian peoples; and he had lamented the probable loss of souls through the dearth of priests, for South America had been neglected from the time of the suppression of the Jesuits (1773). Another motive, however, more urgent still, carried weight with the Pope and Don Bosco. On the banks of the La Plata and all along the eastern coast of South America were located thousands of Italian immigrants, who had fled from Italy to escape poverty. Agriculture, river navigation, business and the trades were all represented in a flourishing manner by these energetic and industrious settlers. The venerable Archbishop Frederic Aneyros, of Buenos Ayres, had besought Don Bosco during many years for a foundation, with liberal and large-hearted offers of support for as many Salesian Fathers and Sisters as

he could part with to confer a blessing on that remote diocese.

For the Argentine Republic, therefore, Don Bosco organized his first missionary enterprise. The heroic band was composed of ten priests and coadjutor Salesian Brothers and fifteen Sisters of Mary, Help of Christians. Don Cagliero (now a prince of the Church), a favorite disciple of Don Bosco, whom he had never left from the age of thirteen, and who had become one of the most learned and saintly sons of the Society, was appointed the director of the mission, and Don Fagnano, prefect of Varese College, a man of rare wisdom and heroic virtue, was made assistant.

Don Bosco, ever animated with love and loyalty to Peter's Chair, bade them repair to Rome, where on November 1, 1875, Pius IX received them all with fatherly affection, having previously given a special and prolonged audience to Don Cagliero. With his blessing the holy Pontiff addressed to each of them kindly and inspiriting counsels. Speaking of the Argentine Republic, he remarked: "It is a beautiful country. You will go farther - to Chili - where I formerly lived, and of which I have pleasant memories; you will travel farther still, perhaps evangelize the Patagonian savages whom the Jesuits could not tame because they eat their missionaries. Have courage and confidence. You are vessels full of good seed. Try to sow it with self-sacrifice and energy; the harvest will be plentiful, and console the last years of my stormy pontificate."

Returning to Turin, they celebrated solemnly the Feast of Saint Martin on the eve of their departure, receiving the blessing of Archbishop Gastaldi. After Vespers, Don Bosco preached the farewell sermon. His concluding words were full of pathos: "Go, my dear sons in Saint Francis of Sales, with the blessing of the Successor of Saint Peter, head of the

Apostles; with the blessing of our venerated Archbishop; allow my feeble hands also to bless you once more. Catholics, do not forget the Father of the Church, the Pope. Salesians, do not forget the family from which you are about to be separated, and your father who received you into it, whose hearts will follow you." At these words emotion overpowered the speaker, and he was forced to descend from the pulpit. The parting between the venerable founder and his beloved Don Cagliero was most touching; the last words of his father and benefactor were treasured by the son as words falling from the lips of Christ Himself. As Don Bosco pressed his hands in farewell he left in them as a parting gift a small box, saying: "You need not open it in a hurry." Don Cagliero, you will think, must have performed a heroic act of mortification daily when I tell you that the precious box remained closed for several years. Not until that day in 1884 when the mail brought to him the Holy Father's Bull promoting him to the episcopate, did he open it by a sudden inspiration. As he pressed the spring, a thrill of wonder and thanksgiving ran through his frame, and he dropped upon his knees, for there disclosed was a beautiful pectoral cross, and in Don Bosco's hand the words: "For our first Bishop."

The vessel in which the missioners embarked, the Savoy, was filled with emigrants - Italian, French and Spanish. Don Cagliero instructed them in the three languages; the priests celebrated Mass, at which the captain and most of the passengers assisted. They disembarked at Rio Janeiro on December 7th. The Brazilian Archbishop, whose need of priests was a source of affliction to him, detained them for three hours with every manifestation of kindness and attention. "Ah!" said he sadly, "if your superior could send me dozens, or rather hundreds of Salesians, what a treasure for my flock! They would be my well-beloved sons." But the good prelate had to wait in prayer and hope seven years.

At Montevideo, where they stopped again, a rich chemist welcomed them: "My four sons attend Don Bosco's college at Val Salice," he said. "How hard it is to have to send them so far! Shall we never have a Salesian college here?" In a little more than a year his wish was realized.

On December 14th the missioners arrived at Buenos Ayres, where they were greeted by upwards of two hundred of their fellow-countrymen - some of whom had been educated in the Oratories of Turin - who escorted them with joy to the home prepared for them. Here the Archbishop welcomed these new champions and co-workers of Christ as his dear friends and children. At his entreaty they at once devoted themselves to the parochial duties of the Church, Madre de Misericordia (Mother of Mercy), Don Cagliero remaining as rector, Don Baccino as curate, and Don Belmonte, not yet ordained, as organist.

Don Fagnano with the seven others and some of the Salesian nuns, repaired to Los Arroyos. There the College of Saint Nicholas was opened on March 20, 1876, by the Archbishop in person and Don Fagnano. The work increased and with it the ardor and enthusiasm of the people; the progress was so rapid, the adults thirsting for the word of God, and the children growing in habits of virtue, that structures for schools and colleges arose almost by magic side by side with buildings and workshops for artisans. Large areas of land were given them for agricultural schools and farms.

The results were so astonishing - indeed, little short of miraculous - that Don Bosco with great willingness of heart sent almost annually new detachments of Salesians and Sisters of Mary, Help of Christians. Buenos Ayres became a mother-house - a rival of Turin - from which radiated new foundations on all sides. "Had there been a hundred, nay a thousand Salesians," says a historian, "they would not have

been sufficient." Two novitiates were opened, one for priests and one for sisters; and while postulants with strong and beautiful vocations were hurrying to give themselves to God in religion, gifted and pious aspirants to the altar were multiplying and filling the Salesian seminaries erected at Montevideo and other cities.

The Salesian Apostolate in Patagonia

From that ever-memorable day in 1854, when Don Bosco stood by the bedside of the youthful Cagliero, dying of cholera, and beheld the realistic vision of the boy's future mission among "a savage people of tall stature and fierce aspect, of copper-colored skin, with thick black hair tied by a string at the forehead," his apostolic heart had gone often to the wilds of Patagonia, and their savage races had been an attraction for his zeal and prayers. And when Archbishop Aneyro proposed that the Salesians should attempt to evangelize the tribes, Don Bosco eagerly assented. In 1879 Don Costamagna with several other Salesians and Sisters became pioneers in this new field of apostolic labor, full of hardships and dangers. In 1880 Don Bosco wrote to his Co-operators (the third Salesian Order): "Patagonia is the most glorious field offered by Providence for your charitable works, where until now teachers of the Gospel could not penetrate; but the time of mercy has arrived. The first trial, although painful and dangerous, has succeeded; five hundred natives received baptism." He complains feelingly of a lack of money to assist this distant mission. Later, in 1881, announcing the departure of twelve priests and brothers and eight Sisters, he continues: "Agriculture is especially developed in our Patagonian institutions; we have erected churches, opened schools, built residences for priests and teachers, and hospitals for wandering Indians on both banks of the Black river. These savages are docile, easily taught arts and trades, and, above all, agriculture, which is still unknown among these wandering tribes." General Roca, president of the Argentine Republic, held Don Bosco and the Salesians in the highest esteem, and favored and supported them with the respect and generosity that their self-denying services to the State merited.

In 1883 the court of Rome created two ecclesiastical provinces in Patagonia: the north and center of the country formed an apostolic pro-vicariate and Don Cagliero was appointed pro-Vicar Apostolic; the south, with Tierra del Fuego and the neighboring islands became an apostolic prefecture with Don Fagnano as Prefect Apostolic.

The present Archbishop of Buenos Ayres in a pastoral letter on the centenary feast of Don Bosco (1915) says of the first Salesian missionaries in Patagonia: "By their intrepid zeal and conspicuous ability they reaped an immense harvest of souls and laid the foundations of a flourishing Christian civilization. In our own province," he continues, "the two Salesian Institutes educate in their seventy-five houses some 25,000 boys and girls, and this is all carried on in the method of enterprising charity which their founder initiated for his followers. The consoling results of this work, the numerous ecclesiastical vocations, the clubs and social work among the 'past-pupils' of both sexes which extend into all classes of society, plainly demonstrate that the work of Don Bosco is providential in its mission, and a new manifestation of the power and goodness of Mary, Help of Christians, in the salvation of the world."

Happily for my readers I can again quote from the thrilling lecture of His Eminence Cardinal Cagliero in Rome, some interesting details on the South American Mission:

"The first Salesian missionaries reached Buenos Ayres on December 14, 1875. They had been called there by the Archbishop, who was desirous of a Religious Congregation that might take special care of the Italian emigrants, already so numerous in the young Republic. They numbered only ten and were led by me. I was not to remain there, but was only to establish them in their new mission and then to return to Italy. On the quay two hundred Italians and the

prominent citizens awaited us and gave us a wonderful welcome.

"Encouraged and invited by the Archbishop I began at once to visit the places where the new establishments were to rise, and I saw what an abundant harvest the Lord prepared for us.

"Just as we set foot on Argentine territory the government prepared a scientific expedition into unexplored Patagonia, We asked to form part of it but a refusal was given us, because, it was said, it was too early yet, and that later on, when the ways should be open to penetration of civilization among these barbarous and violent tribes, we should be able to commence our work. In fact, only in 1879 did the first four missionaries set out for Patagonia. But their attempt was fruitless, because the vessel on which they traveled was wrecked in the waters of Rio Negro, the great river that is the principal means of communication with Patagonia and is ordinarily navigated by the largest warships. With difficulty the missionaries saved their lives.

"In the following year the Argentine government, suffering exceedingly from the continual incursions of the savage tribes of Patagonia into the civilized regions, prepared against them an armed expedition of 2,000 men under the minister of war himself, who was afterwards to become President of the Republic. The Salesians asked to accompany the expedition, proposing to attempt by means of the Cross that conquest which the Argentine troops were preparing to make with the sword. They were given place in the official headquarters, and lived as the soldiers on the long march up to the lines of the unexplored and terrifying region.

"The first contact of the white soldiers with the advance guard of the Patagonian tribes was full of menace. An odd

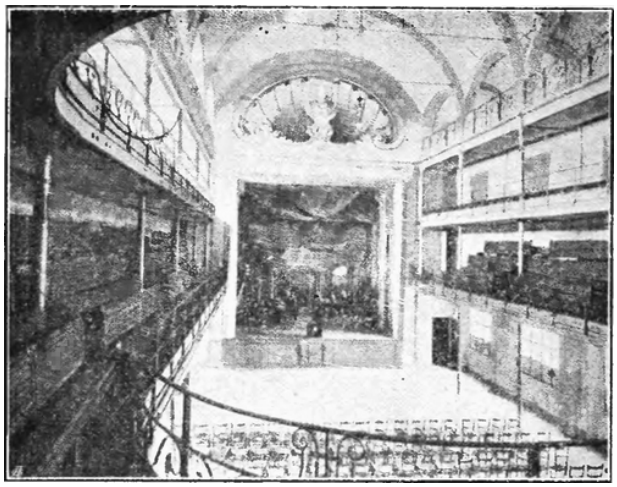
arrow flew and an odd gun responded. General Roca, despairing of being able to approach the savages so as to open negotiations, was preparing for a great violent action when the missionaries insistently asked him for permission to make a fresh pacific overture with them. By the aid of gestures - for no one had an idea of the Patagonian tongue - they succeeded in making them understand they had peaceful intentions. Afterwards, having succeeded in exchanging signs rather than words, they persuaded these wild people that their idea of opposing by force the penetration of the Argentines was vain, since, though they had lances and arrows, the whites had rifles that killed before the whites entered into action. And thus the chief heads, Sayuhueque and Yancuche, surrendered and recognized the Argentine authority, accepting the conditions imposed upon them. The cacico Namuncura retired with 400 lances to an angle of a distant territory. The conditions of the Argentine government were very benevolent: foods were guaranteed for three years, until the tribes should have learned agriculture, then tracts of ground to cultivate and make profitable."

And thus His Eminence proceeded detailing missionary successes "by blood and by perspiration", as Don Bosco had foretold so long before. Now it was a sick call of 1,500 miles on horseback, again catechising, baptizing, exploring, until today the first ten missionaries have grown into 1,400, and Don Bosco's Institutes cover Chili, Brazil, Paraguay, Central America, Colombia, Ecuador, the Argentine and Patagonia.

Monsignor Fagnano, the first Missionary Companion of Cardinal Cagliero, recently summoned from his earthly labors (September 18, 1916) to his reward exceeding great, Christianized and civilized Southern Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, of which region he was appointed Prefect Apostolic in 1885. "An athlete of body and soul," he was

styled. His apostolic zeal knew no bounds; he forsook all the amenities of life, intellectual and social, all the honors that the Republics would have lavished upon him, to give himself to the savage tribes of those cold and inhospitable wilds, whom he converted in thousands. This abject race he so loved that a few years ago he renounced the Episcopal dignity that he might continue to exhaust himself in their service. As a hero of Christian Charity he will ever be remembered; and his name will be recorded even in the civil history of America for the discovery of a lake which the Argentine government in deference to him has named Lake Fagnano.

Two Pictures. The Salesian Co-operators



On the afternoon of Palm Sunday, April 5, 1846, Don Bosco was the prey of indescribable suffering. He stood on the side of a grassy hillock in the picturesque field near Valdocco, watching his four hundred boys playing their merry games for the last time within its pleasant borders. These dear children of his Festive Oratory had made a pilgrimage of a mile that morning to the Church of Our Lady of Campagna, for Mass and Communion, the rosary and the litanies replacing all the way the usual merriment; for today the Festive Oratory must come to an end, if no home, no playground could be secured for their happy Sundays and feast days. Easter Sunday would not bring joy to those four hundred little hearts. These grief-stricken hours of the watcher are feelingly portrayed by his eloquent and devoted son, Father Bonetti:

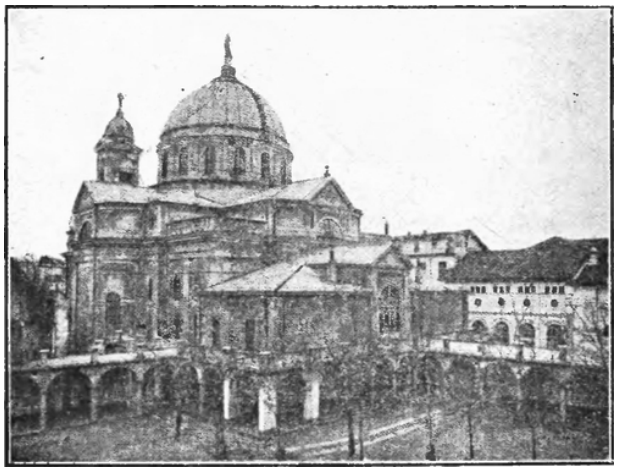
"The distress of the peasant who sees the hail storm destroy his only crop, of the shepherd who is forced to abandon his flock to the wolves, was nothing compared to his affliction; it was more than that of a father or mother constrained to leave their little ones forever. 'Those who have helped me,' he thought, 'have now turned their backs upon me and left me alone with these four hundred boys, and my Oratory must apparently come to an end this evening. Are all my labors, then, thrown to the wind? Have I toiled in vain? Must I disperse all these boys and bid them good-by forever? O

my God! show us some place where we may go or tell me what I am to do!"

Even then the grievous trial was coming to an end, for at that moment a man leaped the fence and brought an offer of what was to prove a permanent place of meeting; it was the poor and dilapidated coach-house in the Valdocco field - Valdocco, now so famous for its wonderful history and the benefits conferred on the world by Don Bosco's Festive Oratories, educational institutes and industrial establishments, all diverging from that first modest Oratory.

From that Palm Sunday of 1846 to 1916 what an outgrowth, what a marvelous train of consequences, of prodigies, inconceivable to human thought! Look on this picture, then on that: Pinardi's shed converted into a pathetic chapel in a piece of meadow land, and today dispersed through the world behold two hundred and fifty flourishing "Don Bosco Institutes" with their churches and seminaries in Italy, and five hundred and twenty in other countries of Europe, North and South America, Australia, Africa and Asia, in which are gathered for religious instruction, secular education and training in the arts and sciences, trades and agriculture, nearly four hundred thousand children and youth of both sexes, the boys tutored by the Salesian Fathers, and the girls by the Salesian Sisters.

A question arises here: one is constrained to ask, Where did the human resources come from? We grant that Don Bosco was an instrument of miraculous power; but such stupendous works, the building of magnificent churches and basilicas, the construction and furnishing of immense groups of costly buildings, the support of thousands of professors and workmen and children, and the princely subsidies necessary for foreign missions - all this points to money - money unlimited, and ever at hand in the hour of need!



And the judgment is a correct one; there was and is such an inexhaustible treasury! and it is found in the great hearts and generous purses of the noble army of Salesian Co-operators - the Third Order of Saint Francis of Sales - "the backbone of the whole spiritual enterprise of Don Bosco," as a Salesian author has styled this union of magnanimous collaborators of the Society during its activities of seventy years.

My readers will not be surprised to learn that this world-wide Society of Salesian Co-operators, now numbering hundreds of thousands of all ranks of society, had as lowly an origin as the First and Second Salesian Orders of Don Bosco. From the beginning of the Oratory numbers of Turin women gave their services to "Mamma Margaret" as co-workers for Don Bosco's children, willingly washing and mending their garments; and Don Bosco himself tells that when he picked up destitute boys on the streets of Turin "some kind ladies of rank charitably clothed these wretched youths, while rich young people interested in our work, sought employment for them in different manufactories and shops, and were successful in placing a great number." To all these earnest laborers united in the cause of charity for the glory of God, Don Bosco gave a prudent and pious rule of life, and obtained for them many spiritual privileges.

The saintly founder was pre-eminently an organizer; and as his works expanded bringing with them a great accumulation of expenditures, he drew together, by the magnetism of his words and personality, a multitude of men and women (anyone over sixteen was eligible for

membership) and established the Society of Salesian Co-operators. The rule just alluded to was remodeled in order to meet the rising exigencies, and to aid more effectually in the sanctification of these new sons and daughters of Don Bosco. "To be Good in Themselves and to Do Good to Others" - this was the motto he inscribed in shining letters on the standard he raised before this solid phalanx of volunteers, this noble spiritual company of men and women of the world, when he formulated for them in 1858 the final code of rules.

"To be good according to the spirit of the Salesian Co-operators", declares the Cardinal Archbishop of Bologna, "is to be good according to the spirit of the Gospel, the spirit which attains its highest point in that great precept of Christ: 'Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect'; and then to do good to others, embraces a mission in some sense apostolic..... Therefore, if the Salesian Co-operators exclude no work which concerns the material good, particularly of the working classes, and of the young, from the sphere of their activity; if, indeed, they seem to have for these a special impulse, the chief object must ever be the spiritual and moral elevation of the people, particularly of the most neglected, to make of them truly the people of God, to form of them the gens sancta, of whom the Holy Spirit speaks."

Don Bosco submitted the revised rule to Pope Pius IX in 1874. His Holiness not only gave the new society his approval and blessing, but graciously placed his own name at the head of the list of Co-operators, at the same time according to it all the indulgences granted to the Third Order of Saint Francis of Assisi. Leo XIII was equally favorable to the new association, and claimed the honor of leading the names in this catalogue of Salesian benefactors. The male members were affiliated to the Society of Saint

Francis of Sales and the female associates to the Society of Mary, Help of Christians.

The Salesian Co-operators

The Society of Salesian Co-operators was canonically established by a brief of May 9, 1876, in which Pius IX sets forth its holy purpose; and in order "that the Society may progress from day to day," he confers upon it singular spiritual favors and copious indulgences. To ensure a claim to these benefits and to a participation in all the Masses and prayers of Salesian missionaries, nuns and lay-brothers throughout the world, the conditions will appear easy, since one need be only a practical Catholic in the true sense. Members may inscribe their names at any Salesian house; and these are all written in the original register at the mother-house in Turin. They are to approach the Sacraments frequently, make the practice for a happy death monthly, if possible, and strive to advance in Christian virtue. They are expected to help destitute children to the extent of their means, and to use their influence that others may contribute to this sacred charity so dear to the Heart of Jesus, who said: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me"; and again, "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it unto Me."

The associates are to have a loving devotion to Our Lady, Help of Christians, the distinctive badge of the Salesian Co-operators, to pray fervently for one another, and to contribute toward the maintenance of the Salesian missions by a monthly or yearly offering. Among their works of charity are catechetical instructions to children, the fostering of religious and priestly vocations, and the diffusion of good Catholic literature in homes.

An annual conference of the Co-operators is held in every Salesian center on January 29th, the feast of their holy

patron, Saint Francis of Sales, and the best sacred orators have felt it an honor to address their distinguished and zealous hearers on that day during the splendid functions of the Solemn Pontifical Mass. Moreover, great Congresses of three days have long been in vogue in Turin, Italy, in Buenos Ayres, S. A., and in other centers, where vital questions are discussed and the ripe experiences of the most capable and influential members of the three Orders are communicated for the betterment and increased succes of their holy enterprises. At these conventions some of the highest dignitaries of the Church preside, and take an active and interested part in the proceedings of the various sessions.

The Salesian Bulletin is the official organ of the Salesian Co-operators; it is edited at the mother-house, Turin, Italy, 32 Via Cottolengo; translated into eight different languages, it has a circulation of more than three hundred thousand copies. The magazine is sent regularly to all the operators in order to keep them in touch with the happenings in the widespread Salesian institutes and missions; its editorials are masterly, and its records and biographical notices are full of edification, instruction, charm and interest.

Don Bosco, in the fullness of his heart, addressed a letter yearly to his beloved Co-operators, a mark of courtesy and affection which he enjoined upon his successors. These letters seem like a breath from the spirit of God, overflowing with divine charity, heartfelt gratitude, and paternal benedictions on their generosity, yet not without burning appeals for their continued assistance: while he promises the overflow of God's bounty upon them and their families in spiritual graces and temporal benefits. In one letter to his fellow-laborers, using as a text our Saviour's words: "Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail they may receive you into everlasting dwellings," he said, "Who are these friends that shall receive you into

the abode of the blessed? These friends are the numerous children rescued from perdition and saved by your charity - Christians and converted pagans - infants of infidels, baptised and become angels in paradise - parents of children, now in their arms in heaven, reclaimed from vice to virtue - the angel guardians of souls already admitted through your care, or who will be - the saints, joyous at their augmented number, thanks to you. Finally, these friends are God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the Blessed Virgin, whom you will have caused to be known, loved and glorified on earth."

One of the most beautiful and affecting human documents I have ever read is "The Last Will and Testament of Don Bosco," addressed to Salesian Co-operators, which I quote in entirety in a later chapter. I would that every reader of mine in perusing these few pages would lay deeply to heart the beautiful lessons contained in this dying memorial of gratitude and love.

Leo XIII said one day to Don Bosco: "Every time you speak to the Co-operators tell them that I bless them from my heart; that their scope must be to place a barrier against the evils that beset youth, and they should form but one heart and soul to aid in gaining the ends which the Society of Saint Francis of Sales proposes to itself." And who knew better the needs of our times and had a more intimate knowledge of parochial work than our late beloved Pontiff, Pius X? In one of his letters cor ad cor to Don Rua, the second Superior General, he wrote: "I most fervently hope that this association of Salesian Co-operators will spread its organization every day, so that it may exert its influence in every village and town, and that through the zeal of the Bishops the spirit of the founder of the Salesians may live and flourish, and the number of his followers continually increase."

Don Bosco's Relations With His Co-operators

Don Bosco lived in a fraternal atmosphere with his Co-operators; his relations with them partook somewhat of the intimate intercourse that love, always the propelling force in his life, gave to his communications with his priests and brethren. Perhaps we may not attribute entirely to charity the munificence with which they met his needs; their generosity and their spirit of emulation in making sacrifices on his behalf, were rewarded by manifest favors from Heaven, spiritual and temporal. He whose prayers were so potent with God and Our Lady, and who gave them so freely for healing to all classes of sufferers, could not fail to obtain extraordinary benedictions for helpers so near and dear to his heart. Hundreds are recorded, many of them being attested miracles. The paralytic, the diseased of all kinds, the deaf and dumb, the blind, all were restored to their normal state, and in gratitude many of the recipients of these divine favors brought him precious offerings in jewels or money.

One day a note fell due of twelve thousand francs, which he had vainly tried to procure. As he was returning to the Oratory, a little heavy hearted after his long and fruitless quest, he was met by a woman who accosted him respectfully: "Pardon me, Father, but my master is very ill and has been asking for you; he thought you were absent from Turin". Don Bosco accompanied her to the house and found the patient in a violent fever. Greeting him with his usual cheerfulness, he sat down by his side while the sick man poured forth entreaties for relief from his sufferings. In half an hour he suddenly arose cured, and signing a cheque

for the sum required handed it to Don Bosco with the fervent expressions of a grateful heart.

In a town of Genoa, San Pier d'Arena, there were thirty thousand souls; yet the church was almost deserted, and one priest sufficed for the parish. It happened that a Salesian Co-operator, the wife of a railway official, fell dangerously ill and refused to see any priest but Don Bosco. Her husband, an irreligious man, was highly pleased at her exclusiveness, being fully convinced that the Turin apostle would not travel two hundred miles to hear a woman's confession. To his surprise, Don Bosco hastened to her without delay, heard her confession, and exhorted her to confidence in Our Lady, Help of Christians.

As he rose to depart, he remarked: "As I shall remain here a few days, come to church one of these mornings, and I will give you the Holy Communion."

The husband, with difficulty repressing his indignation, said: "Do you not see she is dying, sir?"

"But Our Lady, Help of Christians is all-powerful," answered Don Bosco with a serene smile. "And if you will pray also, we shall obtain your cure with your wife's."

"Mine?" was the rather sharp rejoinder; "I am not ill."

Don Bosco's response was only to kneel and recite the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Hail, Holy Queen, enjoining them to continue the prayers daily.

A few days after, the official conducted his wife, now wholly recovered, to early Mass, and with tears of pious gratitude she received the Holy Communion from Don Bosco's hand. After Mass Don Bosco greeted them, and said gently to the husband: "Now I confidently await the second recovery." The

gentleman understood, confessed on the spot, and became from that time forth a fervent, practical Catholic. This double miracle caused a great stir in the parish; hearts were profoundly moved, and many remarkable conversions consoled Don Bosco and the rector of the church, who had to call on three priests to assist him. Moreover, the happy effect of Don Bosco's brief presence in the town was rendered lasting; a pressing appeal for a foundation was made to him, accompanied with the offer of a suitable house. He gladly acceded to the desires of priest and people; a beautiful church was erected, and an Oratory soon grew into a large and flourishing Institute, under the care of the Salesian Fathers.

A rich marquis one day lamented to Don Bosco that the loss of twenty thousand francs had prevented him from making an offering toward one of the Salesian projects.

"But if you recover it, what will you do?" inquired Don Bosco, pleasantly.

"Father, I will give you one-half," replied the marquis impetuously. "But neither you nor I will ever get one centime of those twenty thousand francs."

"Who knows, my lord?" laughed Don Bosco. "My orphans are in need, and I shall get them to pray."

A few days after the marquis sent a messenger to the Oratory with five thousand francs, half of a sum he had recovered that morning. A week later the remainder of the debt having come to him, the marquis faithfully kept his promise to his benefactor.

The Order of Saint Francis of Sales was now widely spreading in France. Besides Nice, houses were opened at Navarre, Marseilles, and Saint-Cyr, in 1879. In 1880, the first

Oratory was inaugurated in Spain at Utrera. In 1883, Nichteroy, in Brazil, was favored with a foundation, and missions were established at Tierra del Fuego and the Falkland Islands. In 1887 Austria opened its arms to the son of Saint Francis of Sales, and the establishment of the Institute at Trent was the beginning of many blessings to the empire.

During the same year Don Bosco dispatched a number of Salesian Fathers to London, England, where they founded the Institute at Battersea, now one of the most prosperous houses of the Society. Other flourishing foundations have since been made in England. The Salesian Fathers are held in the highest esteem by His Eminence Cardinal Bourne, whose reverence for the Venerable Don Bosco is manifested in the words I quote:

"It is a life-long memory to have known personally one in whom the Church already discerns tokens of heroic sanctity. It was my privilege to see Don Bosco when he visited Paris in 1883, and to be a witness of the extraordinary impression which the fame of his holiness at once produced upon that city.

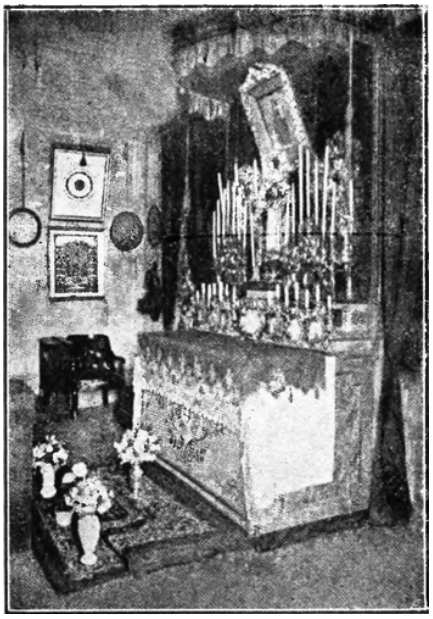
"Two years later, after my ordination to the priesthood, it was given me to visit Turin and to see the Venerable Founder of the Salesian Congregation in the midst of his religious family at the Mother-House of the Institute.

"In the autumn of 1887 I was able, at his direct request, to render some slight personal service to his sons on their arrival among us to found the first Salesian house in any English Speaking Country.

"Don Bosco teaches us that God still raises up the weak things to confound the strong. The Providence of God has

rarely been manifested more plainly or more decisively than in the origin and growth of the Salesian Congregation."

Don Bosco in France



Up to his last years, Don Bosco was accustomed to visit regularly his institutions in France. They had no revenue except public charity; and the Fathers confessed that each visit of his was to them a harvest while everywhere he enlisted new Co-operators. His life during these visitations was full of activity. After his Mass and breakfast the house was crowded with visitors, whom he received till midday. Dinner over, he again gave audiences, generally from one o'clock till eight. He took his meals with the community, where he was always cheerful and witty. After supper he attended to his correspondence; the mail brought him daily a hundred letters or more, and he scrupulously endeavored to answer all. An Italian and a French secretary read to him the letters ordinarily, and received his instructions as to the answers, which were read aloud to him the next morning and signed by him. He was consulted by persons of all ranks on the most diverse subjects, for his judgment was regarded with unlimited confidence. He retired at eleven o'clock, to spend, no doubt, hours of prayer and close union with the Holy Spirit after the long day of labor for God's glory. From his seminary life he had limited his hours of sleep to five. "My mother taught me to do with little sleep," he used to say. And one of his disciples tells us that he often contented himself with less than five hours, adding the almost incredible fact that two nights of the week he slept none at all.

In 1883 he extended his travels through France, desirous of doing all the good possible ere his health, which was already perceptibly weakening, should fail utterly. In Avignon, the house where he was a guest was besieged. In spite of the watchfulness of his hosts, pieces of his soutane were clipped off as relics, for he was everywhere venerated as a saint.

"Well, if my soutane is cut," he would say with a benignant smile, "I may hope for a new one."

While awaiting dinner one day at the Saint Peter's Patronage, Lyons, a Salesian house, Don Bosco expressed regret that the Fathers had not as yet erected a chapel more worthy of their Eucharistic Guest. A Mr. Michel present showed him a plan which the architect had drawn at an estimate of thirty thousand francs.

"But you will hardly get that sum now, Father," he observed; "we have had many collections and lotteries for charity here this winter."

"Nevertheless," persisted the Father, "I would like to have the money today; I feel ashamed of so poor a chapel."

Dinner was announced. At dessert the attorney of the house arose and addressed Don Bosco. "Father, I take pleasure in informing you that a charitable donor left thirty thousand francs with me for you today."

"Praise to Our Lady, Help of Christians!" exclaimed Don Bosco, with clasped hands and eyes raised to Heaven. Those present were astounded at seeing in the offering the exact sum required.

On the feast day of the rector, Don Ronchail, March 19th, a number of gentlemen dined at the Oratory. The conversation

fell upon an addition which was needed at the printing house.

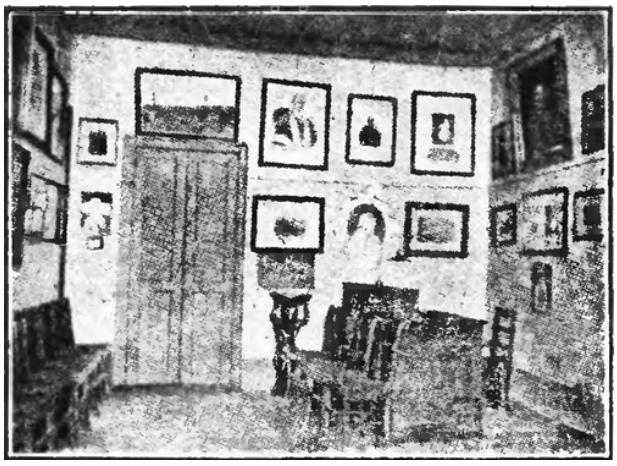
"How much will it cost?" asked one.

"Ten thousand francs", was the answer.

"Only that?" said the lawyer, taking out his memorandum. "We are ten here, not counting the Reverend Fathers. I open a list, and head it with one thousand francs." The paper was passed around, and in a few moments the whole sum was subscribed.

The Apostle of Turin, while collecting for his own multiple charities, often accepted invitations to advocate the cause of local orphanages or other institutions dependent upon public aid. On one occasion, while speaking at Lyons, a few considerations of his produced a powerful effect. After expatiating on the works of the Abbé Boisard for youth, he proceeded to point out that children are God's favorites, hence the necessity of guarding in early childhood the innocence, the virtues infused into the soul by the beneficence of God in the sacrament of Baptism. Then passing to social life, he continued: "If youth is bad, society will be bad. To save society, then, youth must be protected. Do you know where the salvation of society is? In your pockets. These children, whom the patronage and workshops receive, want your help and await your alms. If you repulse them and abandon them to communist theories, they will come to demand from you one day the money you now refuse; not with hat in hand, but knife at the throat; perhaps with your money they will demand your life."

His arrival in Paris was greeted with almost incredible enthusiasm. "A thaumaturgus, a saint, the Italian Saint Vincent of Paul is in our city!" was the cry everywhere. For a



fortnight he was "the lion of the day." He preached many sermons in Paris, commencing in the Church of Notre Dame des Victoires. Sceptics were moved, and numerous remarkable conversions followed in the great city. Crowds of the faithful congregated wherever he was expected, and waited patiently long hours in order to see him and get "the blessing of a saint."

An eye-witness writes: "I have never seen him in his orphanages, among the priests he educated; but I have seen him among the multitude, who knelt at his feet, kissed his hands, bent for his blessing; but what charmed me most was the humility and modesty of the object of this demonstration, who accepted none of it as his own, but referred all to God and the Blessed Virgin. He, a peasant's son, remained so, and sought no other prestige. He attributed all that he accomplished to Our Lady, Help of Christians; to her intercession all was due. He passed along doing good, and devoting himself to all, without choice, without predilection."

A memorable feature of Don Bosco's stay in Paris was his meeting with the celebrated Apostle of Africa, the founder of the White Fathers, Cardinal Lavigerie, who, in the Church of San Pierre, pronounced a magnificent eulogy on the Italian Apostle and his works, of which the Cardinal had seen the humble beginning in Turin. Addressing Don Bosco, His Eminence said: "I live in a country where Saint Vincent of Paul was carried by force and held in slavery during two years. Now another Saint Vincent of Paul is wanted in Tunis, brought by love, not by force. This Saint Vincent of Paul is

you, Reverend Father; with your religious family, half Italian, half French, you will accomplish better than any other, the necessary work of peace and conciliation. Your place is waiting for you..... Father of Italian orphans, I appeal to your heart. You have already responded to Europe and America; here is Africa presenting desolate children whom your heart is large enough to contain." Don Bosco could not resist this appeal. But it was many years after his holy death that Don Rua, his successor, was enabled to fulfill his promise to Cardinal Lavigerie, and found a house of Salesian Fathers in Tunis.

Among the many prodigies wrought by Don Bosco during his journey I must relate one, touching in its simplicity. One day shortly after his arrival at Nice, he had said Mass in a convent near the railway station, when a son of the official, a boy of seven, who had never walked without crutches, was brought to him by the mother, who begged him to bless her lame child.

"Willingly," answered Don Bosco, "I give him the benediction of Our Lady, Help of Christians," Then stroking the boy's cheek, he repaired to the end of the parlor.

"Come to me now, my little friend," he said, "but without crutches; let them fall. Don't be afraid. No, do not give him your hand."

The little one paused, while his mother encouraged him. Timidly, step by step, he approached Don Bosco, who then told him to go back and get his crutches. In the excitement of his new found strength, he ran across the room, caught them up, and rushed to the station whirling them in the air to the wonder of the passers-by. His mother, pale with emotion, followed, saying: "He is my son; Don Bosco has cured him." This miracle was witnessed by Don Ronchail,

several religious, and some ladies who had come to consult Don Bosco.

Church of the Sacred Heart in Rome. Don Bosco in Spain

In 1884 Don Bosco was the victim of so serious an illness that grave fears were felt throughout the Society that they were about to be bereaved of their saintly Father. In the face of so irreparable a loss, Masses and prayers were offered from thousands of hearts with a fervor and earnestness of faith that won the victory.

After Don Bosco had recovered sufficiently to say Mass and resume some of his duties, he sent a letter of thanks, through the Bulletin, to all those "who had kindly prayed for him. With all his children he supplicates the Lord to bless and prosper his Co-operators and in this difficult and trying time to avert all disgrace from them and their families."

Don Bosco had built many churches, some of which were splendid and imposing, out of the alms of his faithful Co-operators. Pius IX, who had beheld with heart-rending grief several churches confiscated in Rome, saw the need of a new place of worship on the Esquiline Hill, where fifteen thousand souls were deprived of spiritual helps. Shortly before his death in 1879, he said to Don Bosco: "You must build another church here in Rome; it will be the crowning work of your career; and to win the concurrence of Providence, we will dedicate it to the Sacred Heart."

Don Bosco might well have shrunk from so arduous a charge; for the foundation and support of his institutes and orphanages, now nearly eighty, with his South American missions, already consumed incredible sums; but the command of Pius IX was enough. The holy pontiff bought the

ground and initiated the work ere he was called to the heavenly reward of his labors.

Leo XIII, on his accession, confirmed the mandate of his departed predecessor, and Don Bosco set out with a tremulous heart, but with confidence in Mary, Help of Christian, to collect funds for the magnificent edifice already planned. The Cardinal Archbishop of Turin had appealed to all Italy and the various provinces strove to rival one another in generosity. The construction occupied six years and cost three millions. It is a majestic temple of divine worship, worthy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

This noble basilica was the chief center of Don Bosco's activity after his restoration to health. Three years more of devoted labor, of study and attention to the finer details, for which his extraordinary knowledge and taste in all points of ecclesiastical architecture fitted him, and he had the happiness of witnessing its completion. Its solemn consecration to the Sacred Heart by the Cardinal Vicar, on May 14, 1887, was coincident, as Don Bosco had desired, with Leo XIII's sacerdotal jubilee - the first fruit of gifts from the whole world to the august pontiff. On that day Leo XIII gave a long and most paternal audience to Don Bosco and Don Rua, and with a full heart thanked them and the Salesians in the name of Rome and the universal Church.

Don Bosco visited Spain in 1886. On his arrival, April 8th, he remained a month in Barcelona, where a Salesian Institute, under the rectorship of Don John Branda, was in a high degree of prosperity. With this house a double prophecy of the saintly founder is connected. In December, 1880, six years previous, the founder had entrusted to Don Branda, then in Turin, a mission in Utrera, Spain. "In due time," he said, "you will receive a letter from a wealthy lady in

Barcelona, asking you to establish a Salesian Institute, an institute intended for a great destiny."

Don Branda had left Turin in January, 1881, accompanied by Don Cagliero and five other Salesian Fathers. It was in September, 1882, that the predicted letter came to Don Branda from a lady, Dona Serra, who offered him one hundred thousand francs on condition that the Fathers should devote their labors to the poor and desolate children of Barcelona. In 1883 a house was procured and a chapel built. March 1, 1884, saw the inauguration of the new Institute; and from that day its progress was assured, its possibilities for good steadily increasing and the Fathers, with their large clientele of Co-operators and youthful charges, happily working out the great destiny foretold by the founder.

One day during his visit Don Bosco was walking with Don Rua and Don Branda in the beautiful and spacious garden, when he suddenly pointed to a large field adjacent. "Buy that ground for your garden," he said to Don Branda, "for this one must be built upon."

"But I have no money," remarked Don Branda in surprise.

"You doubt Providence?" questioned the founder. "Nevertheless, this field must be purchased." Then, pointing to a neighboring garden, he continued: "Buy that garden also and establish there a house of Mary, Help of Christians, to educate poor young girls as nuns for the missions."

Don Branda, still more amazed, replied: "My Father, the proprietor has so great a love for this property that he would not part with it for two hundred thousand francs."

"Even though you had not a centime you must buy it; the Blessed Virgin desires there should be a home here for our

Sisters. You will see how difficulties will vanish."

The certain awe that penetrated the two Fathers did not hinder Don Rua, who was his alter ego, from entreating Don Bosco to tell them how he had learned Our Lady's wish. The prophet related in the most simple manner that a few weeks before, on March 2, soon after his arrival in Barcelona, the Blessed Virgin had appeared to him, as formerly in childhood, in the dress of a shepherdess. "Then she foretold many works which I have since accomplished for the poor orphans of Turin; now she commanded the purchase of this garden and the erection of a convent for nuns." The field was bought without trouble; but the beautiful villa became the possession of the Salesians only on the death of the proprietor, which happened shortly after. His heir made generous terms with the Fathers and became one of their most zealous Co-operators.

In November of that year, 1886, the Sisters of Our Lady, Help of Christians, were installed in their new home and ere long opened a school for poor young girls; subsequently a novitiate "made nuns for the missions" by attracting many fervent aspirants to shelter themselves from the seductions of the world under the mantle of Mary.

Don Bosco achieved so many wonders and effected so many extraordinary cures in Spain that the veneration he attracted was universal. As in Paris the words, "He is a thaumaturgus, a saint," were repeated everywhere; and the multitudes who thronged wherever he was to be seen, felt that a heavenly atmosphere surrounded them in his presence.

In 1887, the year preceding Don Bosco's death, an earthquake destroyed almost the entire country of Liguria. Several of the Salesian Institutes were materially injured,

though no loss of life ensued. Don Bosco remarked also that amid those terrible scenes where hundreds perished, his Co-operators were preserved miraculously. His solicitations for help in the interest of the sufferers were met with instant and liberal contributions, so that the Oratories were soon enabled to repair the serious damages wrought by the dread upheaval.

Failure in Health. Letter to his Co-operators. Seminary of Foreign Missions

Don Bosco's health and strength had been slowly but perceptibly lessening for some years. A celebrated consulting physician, after a careful examination during his prolonged illness of 1884, had said of him: "Marvelous actions are reported of Don Bosco; but to me the greatest miracle is that, exhausted as he is, he is still alive."

Exhaustion! is there anything that holds pain in solution with more acute and relentless power? But the heroic sufferer was never heard to complain; his wan face, his weakened limbs, his bowed shoulders, told the story to his brethren and friends. Yet he never succumbed to weakness. Retaining to the last the direction of the Society, his solicitude for its spiritual and temporal well-being never flagged, nor his superhuman wisdom in forming projects and laying out plans for the individual and collective good of the three Salesian Orders and their world-wide charges.

The saintly founder's last long and zealous letter "To his Beloved Co-operators," contains a summary of all the year's work for the glory of God effected by the Salesian laborers. Several new foundations - in Rome, England, Austria and Ecuador, S. A.; large accessions of property; new structures for the various educational and charitable purposes of the Institute; thousands of children added to the holy and willing burden of Fathers and Sisters; marvelous extensions of the works, especially in South America, whence letters had often come bearing sublime testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit over souls in their primeval simplicity and ignorance; letters that cause the heart to beat with new

fervor and the head to bow in confusion, seeing that after years of inundation of heavenly grace we have not so gazed upon the Divine Light and so felt the power of Divine Love as have the innocent catechumens of Tierra del Fuego and other uncivilized settlements. It is a wonderful story of progress, of sacrifice and of heroic perseverance, recorded with loving zeal year after year by the saintly Monsignor Fagnano and his colleagues and disciples in the pages of the Salesian Bulletin.

Don Bosco does not conceal from his faithful friends that his life is now hanging by a fragile thread, that this will be his last word of love and counsel. Recommending to their tutelary care the Oratory just begun in Rome, adjacent to the newly-consecrated Church of the Sacred Heart, he quotes the words of Leo XIII. "Devote yourselves to the completion of the Oratory already commenced, that we may have the consolation of saving many poor children by teaching them to become good Christians and honest citizens. I bless you and all who aid your undertaking."

Don Bosco leaves his children, so dearly cherished, "four thoughts as a souvenir". These thoughts are elaborated with a wisdom drawn from the natural and supernatural experiences of nigh-fourscore years in the service of God; to my mind it is a treatise on sociology in a nutshell. First, if we wish to take real care of our own spiritual and temporal interests, we should, above all, take to heart the interests of God and procure by charity the temporal welfare of our neighbor. Secondly, if we wish to obtain favors readily from God we should practice the mandate of our Lord, Give and it shall be given to you. In the third advice he impresses forcibly upon them the truth that almsgiving is not a counsel to be dispensed with if one pleases, but a rigorous precept included in the commandments of our Divine Saviour. It is only a counsel to give away all one's possessions, as

religious do who embrace voluntary poverty; but the precept, But yet of that which remaineth give alms (Saint Luke XI), obliges the distribution of superfluity of property. He confirms his teachings by picturing for them the scene of the Last Day and drawing out the parable of Dives and Lazarus; then, quoting the powerful utterances of Saint James, he ends with these words: "By means of charity we shut behind us the gates of hell and open those of Heaven."

His final paragraph sets the golden seal of love on this memorable letter: "I feel that I am leaving you and I foresee the day approaches when I must pay my tribute to death and descend into the grave. Should my presentiments be fulfilled and this letter be the last you receive from me, the fourth souvenir is: I recommend to your charity all the works which God has deigned to entrust to me during the last fifty years; the Christian education of youth, ecclesiastical vocations and foreign missions; I particularly recommend poor, desolate children to your care, who were always dear to my heart and who, I hope will be, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, my joy and crown in heaven. Now I invoke God's benediction on you; may He deign to pour His most precious blessings on you and yours; if my prayer is heard you will have happy lives, lives full of merit, crowned, on the day God has fixed, with the death of the just. For this end the Salesians and all pupils of our institutions unite their prayers daily with mine; and through the intercession of Our Lady, Help of Christians, and of Saint Francis of Sales, we have a firm and sweet hope of being all united in eternal bliss. Have the charity to pray in your turn for me, who am, with the deepest gratitude, my well-beloved Co-operators,

?Your humble and devoted servant,

John Bosco, Priest.

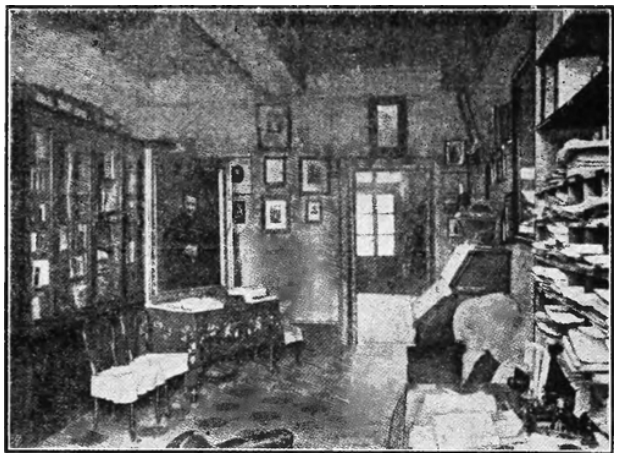
Turin, December, 1887.

May we not say in all truth of the venerable servant of God what the poet, Francis Thompson, has said of the beloved titular patron of his Society: -

"He, the sweet Sales, of whom we scarcely ken
How God he could love more he so loved men."

Yet, the White Angel so near and the borderland of Heaven in view, his superhuman activities did not cease. At the College of Val Salice his dream of half a lifetime was fulfilled that year (1887) by the inauguration of the Seminary for Foreign Missions. He himself, on November 24th, in the absence of Cardinal Alimonda, gave the religious habit to three students of the seminary, respectively of France, England and Poland, and to Prince Czartorisky, heir of one of the greatest European families. The spectators could not control their emotion as Don Bosco in a feeble voice pronounced the solemn words of the ceremonial. But in his heart there was a deep sea of joy; and his pale face reflected the happiness of the new apostles, and the ardor of the Oratory students, who looked forward to a similar glory in the future.

French Pilgrims Visit Don Bosco. Other Visits. Prophecies



Forever memorable was one of the last visits that Don Bosco paid in Turin. Nine hundred pilgrims, Catholic working men of France, on their way to Rome, stopped in Turin and solicited the happiness of seeing him. Weak and suffering as he was, he walked to Sogno's hotel leaning on Don Rua and Mr. Harmel. As the large hall could not accommodate all the pilgrims, Don Bosco seated himself in front of the hotel entrance, and having given them and their families a fervent benediction, he deputed Don Rua to address them in his behalf. Each of the pilgrims then knelt to kiss Don Bosco's hand and receive from him a medal of Our Lady, Help of Christians - a function that lasted nearly an hour, during which the venerable patriarch softly spoke his good wishes: "May the Blessed Virgin protect you and guide you to Heaven!" or to priests, "God grant that you may lead many souls to Him!"

The Salesian Bulletin, in a description of this inspiring scene, adds: "On this evening Don Bosco received many proofs of a generosity which is proverbial. The French pilgrimages leave long and bright trains of faith in their wake."

Scarcely less touching is the pen-picture of a personal visit paid to Don Bosco by a Belgian gentleman in December, 1887.

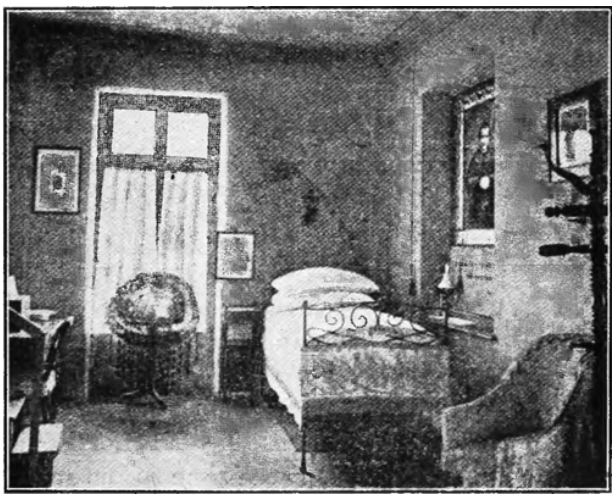
"I had to go up numerous stairs, and at the top, in a very humble attic, I found him. I remarked two splendid etchings there, attesting that if the object of the institution was to educate artisans, artists, too, belonged to it. I met Don Bosco's principal co-laborers, Don Rua, his vicar-general; the other, his assistant, Don Durando. The first, still young, I recognized at once to be an active, energetic character; the second, ascetic-looking, singularly recalled to me the emaciated countenance of Saint Vincent of Paul. As the waiting-room was full of visitors of all classes, Don Durando allowed me to pass into his cell, where I was astonished to see evidences of great poverty. Many poor are better lodged and have better furniture than this eminent clergyman; I believe the Salesian staff are contented with the lodging of a barrack.

"When at last I was to have the happiness of approaching Don Bosco my heart beat more quickly than in going before worldly potentates, reflecting that I was to meet one of those rare men whom God is pleased to raise up at certain times, to show what saints are and what they can achieve. Sanctity! How this word makes worldly people smile! Nevertheless, even from a human point of view, saints have had a great effect on individual lives and nations. Who would dare to say, for example that the social influence of Saint Vincent of Paul has not been deeper, more lasting, and above all, happier and more salutary than that of a Richelieu or a Mazarin? Who could say that the providential originating power bestowed on Don Bosco in this intricate labor question, if it came to be generalized, would not cause unexpected solutions?

"While thus reflecting my turn for admission came. I threw a rapid glance around the room, which was as miserably and poorly furnished as possible, and saw with emotion an old man, seated on a sofa, bent with age and the labors of a

long apostolate. His failing powers no longer admitted of his standing up, but he raised his head, which was bent, and I could see his eyes, weak but full of intelligent goodness.

"Don Bosco spoke French fluently, slowly; but he expressed himself with remarkable clearness. He gave me a simple, dignified and cordial welcome. I was much touched at an aged, almost dying man, unceasingly invaded by visitors, evincing such sincere, sympathetic interest in all. He spoke to me in moving terms of the Bishop of Liege's ardent zeal for workmen. With Don Bosco the sword had cut the scabbard, but what strength of mind still existed in the weakened body! With what a tone of regret he deplored that his feebleness prevented him from actively directing his numerous works! Who more than he is entitled to intone with confidence the canticle of holy Simeon: Nunc dimittis servum tuum in pace?"



The Bishop of Liege, Monsignor Doutreloux, had long been soliciting of Don Bosco a Salesian foundation in his episcopal city of Belgium, but in vain. A personal visit, however, late in December, brought him at last the desired consolation; the founder consented, and even fixed the time and arranged some of the details of the foundation.

It is evident that Don Bosco had long foreseen the time of his death - the day, perhaps, as well as the year. It was in deference to his earnest entreaty that the consecration of the Church of the Sacred Heart was not postponed until 1888.

"I wish to see our church consecrated," he said; "if it is deferred I shall not see it."

When his disciples and friends alluded lovingly to the coming celebration of his "golden jubilee of priesthood" in 1891, he would smile and say, "You are under an illusion." In November, 1887, seated one day at the bedside of a Salesian Father who had received the last Sacraments, he said in a tone of decision: "You will not die; your turn is not yet come; another will take your place." The patient recovered his health; and Don Bosco when dying was actually placed in the bed he had occupied, it being more convenient for his attendants.

A noble benefactress of his works, whose last hour was near, desired to see her holy director. Don Bosco was conducted to her, and greeting her with his usual pleasantry, he said, teasingly: "Ah, Madame la Comtesse, you were to sacrifice two fat calves for my jubilee, and you are breaking your word! But I cannot find fault with you for I shall not be there either."

During the year 1887 some of his dearest friends, among them the Abbé Margotti, a staunch defender and benefactor of Don Bosco and his Society for forty years, had passed through the gates of eternal life, leaving many a void in his great and loving heart. But death was to him only an angel who comes to draw aside the veil that hides the unseen. As the New Year - 1888 - was beginning its progress he said to his brethren: "Make haste and ask a grant for my grave." It was a command which they obeyed with sorrow and apprehension.

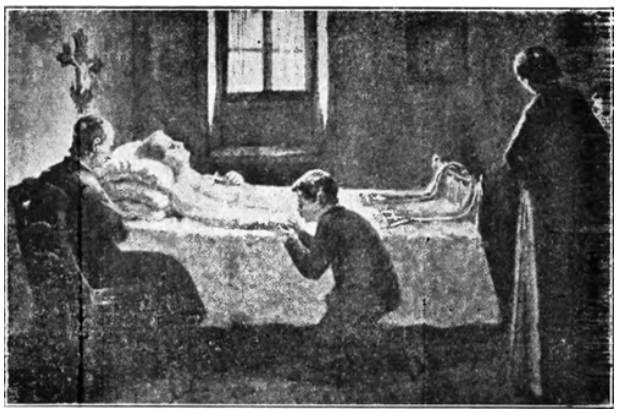
On December 6th the Salesian missionaries started for their far-away destination in Ecuador, South America, and Don Bosco, aided by his secretary, Don Viglietti, descended to

preside at the farewell ceremonies. Don Bonetti preached. But when the dear wayfarers passed before their venerable founder to kiss his hand, his strength failed utterly and he had to be borne to his room.

The next day his beloved Msgr. Cagliero arrived from Patagonia; the emotion on both sides may be conceived; after so lengthened and trying a separation they met for a moment only to face another parting until the eternal years. This meeting suggested to Don Bosco a similar consolation for those Fathers who had been longest in the Society, who had borne with him the burden and heat of the day from the beginning; and Don Cerutti, Don Branda, Don Albera, and others were recalled to the bedside of their dying founder, to the dear Valdocco of their childhood.

On December 17th thirty penitents awaited their holy guide in his ante-room seeking mainly his decision in regard to vocations. All his life Don Bosco had been the apostle of the confessional, and it was currently said of him that no one in that age, except the sainted Curè of Ars, had heard so many confessions. It is a well-known fact that often the whole night wore away in this divine ministration to souls; and those penitents who had left consoled at the midnight hour, on returning early to the church for Mass and Communion, found Don Bosco still in the confessional, the last penitents of the long line still patiently waiting their turn. His infirmities of late had, indeed, forced him to limit the performance of this sacred duty to Wednesday and Saturday evenings; but he would not suffer anyone to be sent away. And now when his attendants, compassionating his weakness, begged leave to dismiss the eager group, he said gently, "No, let them come in; it is the last time." He heard their confessions, advised and consoled them in his leisurely, paternal manner, and they were, indeed, his last penitents.

Loyalty to the Pope in Life and Death. The Closing Scenes



"In 1887, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Leo XIII," records the Salesian Bulletin, "it was proposed to bring out a special issue entitled Exultemus, containing a selection of autographs in honour of the Pope. Among others was this declaration from our Venerable Founder:

"My tribute will be to declare, as I do before all the world, that I make my own the sentiments of esteem, respect, veneration and unfailing love which Saint Francis of Sales bore toward the Sovereign Pontiff; and I would repeat the glorious titles which he had enumerated from the writings of the Fathers and the Councils, forming a crown of precious jewels to adorn the Pontiff's head some of which are: Abel in his favour with God; Abraham in his office of patriarch; Melchisedech in his sacred orders; Aaron by his priestly dignity; Moses in his authority; Samuel by his office of judge and arbitrator; Peter by his power; and some forty others equally honorable and appropriate.

"It is my desire that the followers of the Congregation of Saint Francis of Sales should never swerve from the principles of our Patron, which guided his conduct toward the Holy See: that they should accept readily, respectfully and with simplicity of mind and heart not only the decisions of the Pope concerning dogma and discipline, but that in controverted and open questions they should accept his

opinion as a private Doctor of the Church, rather than that of any theologian in the world.

"I hold, too, that this should not only be a rule for the Salesians and their Co-operators, but for all the faithful and especially for the clergy; for besides the duty of a son toward a Father, besides the duty which all Christians have of veneration for the Vicar of Christ, the Holy Father has a special claim upon our fidelity and deference, as being chosen from among the most enlightened and prudent, and the most conspicuous for virtue, and because in directing the Church he is guided by the light of the Holy Ghost."

Don Bosco's whole life and work, as the reader must be convinced from the foregoing pages, bore the impress of his loyalty and constant devotion to the Successor of Saint Peter. A beautiful and touching emphasis was placed upon this loyalty as he neared death, for which the Salesian Bulletin is my authority:

"In the evening of December 23rd, 1887, just before he received the Holy Viaticum, he was visited by His Eminence Cardinal Alimonda; and on receiving the Cardinal's salutation Don Bosco raised his biretta and said: 'Your Eminence, I beg you to pray for me that I may save my soul;' and then he added, 'I recommend to you my Congregation'.

"The Cardinal encouraged him, speaking of submission to the holy Will of God, and reminding him of all the labour he had undergone for His greater glory. Don Bosco with tears in his eyes, answered: 'I have done what I could; may the holy Will of God be accomplished in me.'

'Few,' observed the Cardinal, 'are able to say that when they come to the end of their life.'

"Don Bosco exclaimed: 'I have lived in troublous times. . . but the authority of the Holy See. . . I have just commissioned Monsignor Cagliero to tell the Holy Father that the Salesians are to be a bulwark to the authority of the Pope, wherever their labours may call them.'"

The diary of Don Bosco's last illness, under the date January 7, 1888, reads thus:

"This evening, with the doctors' permission we began to give Don Bosco some food. Before taking it he uncovered his head and prayed, evidently affected. The bystanders feared that the food might prove hurtful to him, but he bore it very well. Afterwards with unusual liveliness he began to ask a thousand questions. He inquired after news from Rome, about the Pope and his Sacerdotal Jubilee; then he asked for information about the Oratory and wished to speak with some of the brothers. He never felt so well.

"Toward six o'clock he sent to Father Lemoyne the following message: 'How do you account for this, that a person lying sick in bed for twenty-one days, almost without food, with his mind extremely enfeebled, all on a sudden recovers, understands everything, feels strong and almost able to get up, to write and to work? Yes, at this moment I feel as well as if I had never been sick at all. If any one were to ask the reason why, you might answer thus: Quod Deus imperio, tu prece Virgo potes! (What God does by His power, Thou obtainest, Virgin! by Thy intercession). This is certainly not my hour yet; it may be ere long but not now.'

"This unexpected respite in Don Bosco's illness was beyond doubt the result of many prayers offered up through Our Lady in many parts of the world. He was thus enabled to set in order many affairs, to give directions for the management

of the Oratory and to decide about the personnel of our Houses."

He would often joke about his sufferings; and, alluding to his spine which bent more and more painfully, he would repeat laughingly the refrain of a Piedmontese song:

O schina, povra schina
T'as fini de portè fascina.

O back, my poor back
Thou hast ceased to bear burdens.

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast," so the poet, and his saying is confirmed by experience. Don Bosco's brethren and friends still looked for an amelioration of his condition, a hope which was re-echoed by all Turin, and, indeed, by the whole Catholic world. But his physicians never shared these illusions. Dr. Fissore asserted:

"Don Bosco is dying. He is attacked by a cardiopulmonary affection; the liver is affected; the spinal marrow presents a complication causing paralysis of the lower limbs. This illness has no direct cause, it is the effect of a life exhausted by labor; the lamp dies out for want of oil."

Cardinals and archbishops and many persons of the highest rank, as well as pilgrims from Home, besought the honor of seeing the venerated invalid. The Archbishop of Paris, Msgr. Richard, visited him on January 24th, and having given him his blessing, he knelt humbly to receive that of the "Father of Orphans."

"Yes," said Don Bosco, "I bless your Grace and I bless Paris."

"And I," said the Archbishop fervently, "shall tell Paris that I bring Don Bosco's blessing."

On the following day, the feast of Saint Paul, the patient fell into intermittent delirium, his unconscious lips breathing prayers and the names of his benefactors. The Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction were administered on January 29th, the feast of Saint Francis of Sales. During the day he frequently raised his arms toward heaven, repeating, "Fiat voluntas tua"; but gradually paralysis seized the right side and speech failed. On Tuesday, January 31st, at two o'clock in the morning, his agony began, and Don Buzetti called the Fathers, who had left only a short time before.

Soon the humble room was filled with priests, students and laity, kneeling in fervent prayer. The affecting scene is best described by the Salesian Bulletin:

"On Msgr. Cagliero's entrance, Don Rua gave him the stole, and went to Don Bosco's right side. Bending to the ear of the well-beloved Father, he said in a voice full of emotion: 'Don Bosco, we, your sons, are here. We ask your forgiveness for all the grief we may have caused you; in token of pardon and paternal love, bless us once more. I will guide your hand and pronounce the form.'

"What a scene of emotion! All heads were bowed to the ground, and Don Rua, with all the power he could muster in this agonizing moment, pronounced the blessing, raising at the same time Don Bosco's already paralyzed hand to invoke on all present and absent Salesians the protection of Our Lady, Help of Christians.

"At about 3 o'clock the following telegram arrived from Rome:

"'The Holy Father, from the depths of his heart, gives the apostolic benediction to Don Bosco.

"Cardinal Rampolla"?

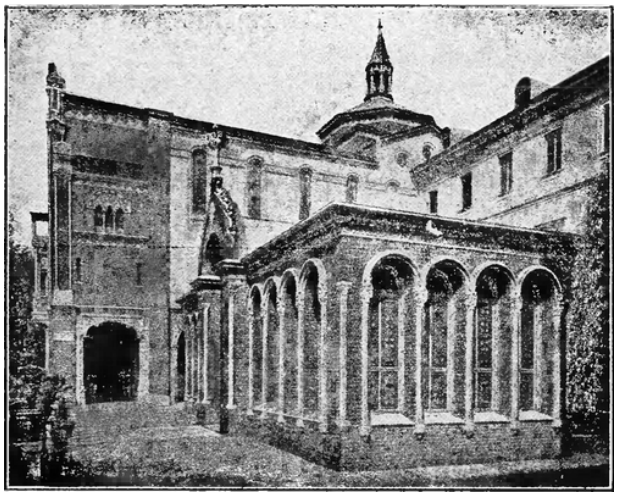
"Monsignor had already read the Proficiscere. At half past four o'clock the Angelus bell rang from the Church of Our Lady, Help of Christians, which all around the death-bed recited. Then Don Bonetti made a short aspiration - Vive Marie! - which the venerable invalid had repeated several times during the preceding days. Suddenly the weak rattle ceased, the breathing was regular and quiet, but for a very short time. Msgr. Cagliero said the last prayer: 'Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I give you my heart, my soul and my life! Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony! Jesus, Mary, Joseph, may I die in peace with you!' Then were heard three scarcely audible sighs. Don Bosco was dead! His age was seventy-two years, five months and fifteen days. The hour was 4.45 a. m. Don Rua, in a few broken sentences of filial veneration, found strength to allude to the simplicity of this death crowning a noble life. Msgr. Cagliero entoned the Subvenite, sancti Dei, in a voice trembling with emotion, then blessed the venerated remains, praying for the repose of his soul. He took off his stole and put it on the dead body, placing the crucifix, which had so often been pressed with unspeakable fervor to the lips of the dying, in the clasped hands. The De Profundis, recited kneeling, was only a long sob."

Leo XIII, on receiving the telegram announcing the death of Don Bosco, exclaimed, raising his eyes to heaven: "Don Bosco è un Santo, un Santo, un Santo! Don Bosco is a Saint, a Saint, a Saint!"

A letter from Don Rua conveyed the sad tidings to the Salesian Co-operators, fifty-three thousand copies of which were not enough. All Turin was deeply impressed by the death of its saintly apostle, and most of the stores were closed through respect.

The body, robed in sacred vestments, was borne to the Church of Saint Francis of Sales, and while it remained exposed to the veneration of the people many extraordinary favors and cures were obtained. On Thursday, February 2, the funeral ceremonies took place in the basilica of Our Lady, Help of Christians. The chanting of the Office was followed by the solemn requiem Mass, sung by Msgr. Cagliero; the music, composed by him, was rendered by singers who were all Don Bosco's orphans. Three bishops and all the clergy and religious orders of Turin and vicinity who could attend, formed a part of the funeral cortege to Val Salice. Eight Salesians bore the coffin, which was preceded by a procession of all the students of the schools and Oratories, and thousands of Don Bosco's former pupils of all professions and trades. Over a hundred thousand, it was believed, did honor to the mortal remains of this ardent lover of God, this loyal priest of His Holy Church, this guardian angel of Christ's little ones, the Venerable Giovanni Bosco, the Apostle of Turin.

The Venerable Don Bosco's Last Will and Testament Addressed to the Salesian Co-operators



My Generous Benefactors,

I feel that the end of my life is now near at hand, and that, at no distant day, I shall have to pay that tribute to death which is common to us all, and to go down into the grave.

But before uttering my last farewell to you upon this earth, I am anxious to discharge a debt of my own towards you, that I may so satisfy a need which I truly feel at heart.

The debt which I have contracted towards you is one of gratitude. You, in fact, have efficiently assisted me in giving a Christian education to a -multitude of poor children, and in placing them in the path of virtue and honorable toil; enabling them to become a consolation to their families, to be useful to themselves and to society at large; and, above all, to attain to eternal happiness by saving their souls.

For me, without your help, nothing of all this would have been possible. Your charity, blessed by the grace of God, has dried up many a fountain of tears and saved a great number

of souls. In the many homes which we have established through your charity, thousands of orphans have found a shelter. Drawn forth from their uncared-for state, rescued from the danger of losing their faith and their virtue, they have, by means of a good education, by application to study, or by apprenticeship to a trade, become good Christians and useful members of society.

The missions, which by your generosity have been established, reach to the uttermost corners of the earth through the hundreds of apostolical labourers whom you have sent forth into the distant regions of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego in order to cultivate and enlarge the vineyard of the Lord.

Printing establishments have, by your charity, been founded in several towns in different lands, whereby many millions of books and publications of various kinds, all of them consecrated to the work of defending truth, of kindling a spirit of piety and of encouraging the practice of virtue, have been circulated amongst the people; and lastly, your charity has raised up a goodly number of churches and chapels, which, through ages to come, if not even to the end of the world, will daily re-echo the praises of God and of the Blessed Virgin; and in them will salvation be found by an innumerable multitude of souls.

Convinced as I am that, after God, this your charity has effected the immense amount of good mentioned above, and also other still greater things, I feel the need of openly expressing to you my deepest gratitude for it all. This I wish to do before the number of my days is accomplished; and today I return you my thanks for all with the greatest affection of my heart.

But, in the name of that persevering generosity itself, wherewith you have come to my assistance, I beseech you to continue the same helpful support to my successor after my death.

The charitable works which, with your co-operation, I have commenced, need me no more, but have still need of you, and of all others besides, who, like yourselves, desire to promote upon earth that which is good. To you I now confide them and commend them to your care.

For your own encouragement, and for the comfort of your souls, I prescribe it as a duty for my successor, to include all our Benefactors, without exception, in the public and private prayers, which are, or shall be offered up at any time in the Houses of the Salesian Congregation. The intention which it will then be his duty always to make is this: that God may vouchsafe unto them, even in this life, for all their charitable gifts, a hundred fold, together with the blessing of health, peace and concord in their families, success in their agricultural and commercial affairs, their deliverance and protection from every kind of evil. I would also further say, that in order to obtain the forgiveness of sins and to secure eternal life, the work that is most efficacious thereto is the charity shown towards poor children, uni ex minimis, to the very least of them all, the poorest and most friendless of the poor, as Jesus our Divine Master and Lord has Himself assured us.

I pray you, moreover, to remember yet furthermore, that, in these latter times in presence of the great dearth of means and pecuniary resources for the education, either by personal superitendence or the instrumentality of others, of poor neglected children in the true Faith and in Christian virtue, the most Holy Virgin has by unmistakable signs constituted Herself in a special way their Patroness and

Protectress, and that in virtue of that office, she obtains for those who are their Benefactors here, numerous and extraordinary favours, not only spiritual but temporal as well.

He who is now writing to you, and all the Salesians as well, can bear witness that many of our benefactors, whose means hitherto were very limited, have found their circumstances gradually improve, when they set themselves, with a generous charity, to succour with their alms our orphan children; insomuch that, instructed by their own experience, there are many amongst them, who, in one way or another, have oftentimes expressed themselves to me to the following effect: "I do not wish you to thank me when I give an alms to your poor children; it is I who ought to thank you for coming to ask me for it. Since the day on which I first began to assist your orphans, my fortune has become double what it was before." Another of our benefactors, Major Cotta, who frequently brought us an offering would often say: "The more money I bring you for your works of charity, the more I prosper in my own affairs. I find by experience that the Lord returns me, even in this world, the hundredfold of that which I give you for His sake." This excellent Christian was one of our foremost benefactors until, at the age of eighty-six, God called him to eternal life to bestow upon him the joys of Heaven in recompense for his charity here below.

Feeble and exhausted though I am, I feel I could never cease speaking to you and commending to your care those poor children of mine, whom I shall soon have to leave; but I must bring my words to a close and lay my pen aside.

Farewell, my generous Benefactors! my dear Co-operators, Farewell! Amongst you there are many, whom in this life, I have never been able to see. Let such find their consolation

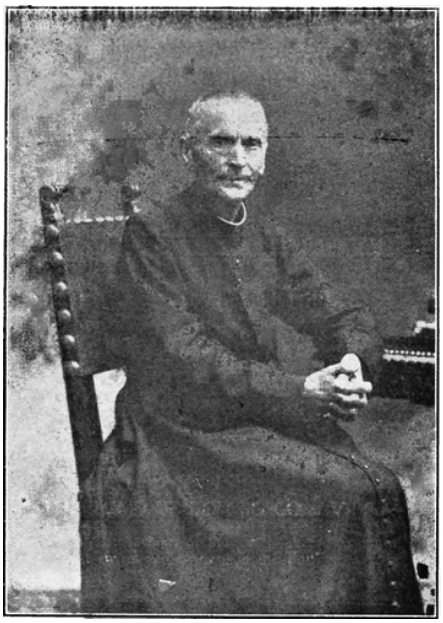
in the thought that in Paradise we shall all of us know each other, and that throughout all eternity we shall rejoice together over the good which, with the assistance of God's grace, we have been able to accomplish in this world, in behalf more especially of poor children.

If through the merits of Jesus Christ and the protection of Mary, Help of Christians, God in His Divine mercy shall deem me worthy of being admitted hereafter into Paradise, I will always pray for you; I will pray for the members of your families; I will pray for all those who are dear to you; that so the day may come when we shall all unite in praising the Majesty of the Creator, in rejoicing in His glory and in celebrating His infinite mercies in triumphant songs of joy for all eternity. Amen.

Ever your most grateful servant,

John Bosco.

A Retrospect. Don Michael Rua, Superior-General



The Venerable Don Bosco, as he lay dying in the Oratory of Valdocco on January 31, 1888, was the Father and Superior General of two hundred and fifty houses of the Salesian Society in all parts of the world. In these beneficent institutions one hundred and thirty thousand children were being educated and trained; and annually there went forth eighteen thousand finished apprentices ready to enter upon the career of life with self-reliance, fitted mentally and physically for their self-chosen art or trade, and - of deeper import to society - their characters moulded to the highest ideals of morality and religion.

During the marvelous years of development from that memorable December 8, 1841, on which Don Bosco, newly-ordained, had providentially met and saved the little waif, Bartholomew Garelli, he had given six thousand priests to the Church of God, learned, fervent and saintly apostles, of whom twelve hundred, faithful to the traditions of their childhood, had clung with filial love to their guardian and devoted themselves heart and soul to the heroic labors for the young which he had initiated in the Society of Saint Francis of Sales. And thousands of students had achieved success in other honorable walks of life, where they reflected credit upon the Society and its Venerable Founder.

What beautiful young virgin souls he had consecrated to God in the Society of Mary, Help of Christians, whose mission went hand in hand with that of the Salesian Fathers everywhere! What husbands and wives, what fathers and mothers had been sent forth equipped to carry on his work, to implant the teachings of Christ in the souls of future generations, to ennoble and elevate the family and society! And who could count the multitude of blessed souls, saved through him, that came in glorious procession to meet him on his entrance into the heavenly land?

Don Bosco left the mantle of his sanctity as well as of his authority upon the shoulders of his beloved Don Michael Rua, who had been his assistant from the foundation of the Salesian Society, whom he had brought up at Valdocco from early childhood in the ways of God and whom he regarded with veneration as a saint. Don Bosco had sometimes in a playful manner in Don Rua's presence held up two fingers significantly toward him. One day the latter ventured to ask the founder the meaning of the gesture. "It means that you are to do half of my work," Don Bosco answered with cheerful satisfaction. And in his last moments the Venerable Superior-General reiterated solemnly to his successor what he had often predicted relative to the expansion of the Society after his departure to another life. He bade Don Rua look forward to the future with confidence and hope, but to prepare for far greater things than even the remarkable achievements which had made his own life so eventful.

The inherent vitality of the Society, indeed, was not even yet realized by those who had watched its progress and taken an active part in it from its inception; its possibilities were yet to be revealed to them, for the passing of the founder, which seemed to crush every hope of a great future, only gave a new impetus to his apostolic works in all directions; and it was manifest that his power as a heavenly protector

and intercessor for the cherished companions and children left on life's highway, was not less effective in its supernatural aid from on high, than his actual presence and living inspiration had been on earth.

As I reflect upon the band of apostles that filed out under Don Bosco's Salesian banner, my heart is thrilled as it is in contemplating the heroism o£ the first Christians. Don Bosco, endowed with the skill, sweetness and magnetism of a heavenly director, had formed saints and heroes to perpetuate his work, for none others could do it. And Mary Mazzarello, whose Cause of Beatification is already opened in Rome, had no less left her spirit of supreme self-denial as a heritage to her Salesian Sisters. What venerable names, radiant with light, loom up before the eyes as memory traces the pages of the Salesian Annals during these three-score years!

How many of these humble and heroic pioneers may not our Holy Mother the Church, in the fullness of her heart, yet raise to her altars - a crown of stars around the head of their Venerable Founder!

Setting aside the countries of their own Europe, cast a glance upon South America. From the Republic of Colombia down the long stretch of mountain, plain, cities and wilderness to Tierra del Fuego, from Rio Janeiro across the interior savage regions of Brazil to the coasts of Chili and Ecuador, the continent is netted with Salesian churches and Institutes and missions. True, the Fathers met with a paternal welcome from the noble and zealous prelates, were received even with civic honors at times by the rulers of the Republics and greeted with joyous acclamations by the people as messengers sent by God for their salvation and religious comfort. Yet none the less they had to take their lives in their hands, prepared to sacrifice them at any

moment. Through long suffering and hardships and tremendous perils they won savage tribes to Christianity and civilization. Their courage did not fail before the army of the poor, afflicted lepers - thousands of them-in the lazarettoes of Colombia, Theirs is a story written large in every department of the "History of South America," and the Salesian annalists merit an honored place in the literature of the world.

In other foreign missions, in Palestine, in Alexandria, Egypt, in Algiers and Cape Town, Africa, in Macao, China, in Tanjore and Calcutta, India, the same exalted ideals of sanctity and self-sacrifice dominate the Salesian; his mission is everywhere founded on the meekness and humility of the Sacred Heart of Jesus - the fullness of the interior life passing into outer activities of zeal, to win hearts and bow minds to the sweet yoke of Christ.

As a confirmation of my remarks touching the expansion of the Society, I will quote from one of the "Annual Letters" of Don Rua, the Superior-General, to the "Society of Co-operators", descriptive of the work accomplished by the Salesians in 1904, the sixteenth year after Don Bosco's happy death.

"Most rich in the blessings of the Heavenly Queen," he declares it to have been, "during this jubilee year of the definition of the dogma of her Immaculate Conception." He names no less than twenty-four new foundations in the different countries, of Festive Oratories, seminaries, theological institutions, schools of agriculture and institutes of arts and trades; while the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians, have been called to establish fourteen new houses of their order in Italy, Spain, Belgium and South America. Urging upon his readers the duty as well as the glory of sustaining the Salesian missions, he states: "Over

one hundred and fifty missionaries left ports of Europe during last October and November for the various parts of Africa, Asia and the Republics of South America." Don Rua calls his co-workers' attention also to "four large churches which our Society, entirely at its own cost, has at present under construction, besides many others of smaller dimensions."

The venerated Don Rua, even on his death-bed, was never weary of manifesting his gratitude to the Salesian Co-operators.

"I desire," he humbly requested, "that you would tell them that I am full of gratitude for the help they have given our works. If Don Bosco said that without them he could have done nothing, how much less could I have done, who am but a poor creature! I am therefore obliged to remember them in a special manner. I will pray for them, for their families and friends, that the Lord may reward them in this life and in the next."

And when in 1910, on the death of the saintly Don Rua, the supreme direction of the Salesian Societies was committed to the Very Reverend Paul Albera, his grateful heart overflowed at once upon his magnanimous Co-operators; after having imparted to them the special blessing of the Holy Father, he made known his sentiments in a long and beautiful letter from which we present a brief excerpt:

"I seize this opportunity to assure you that recognizing my littleness in comparison with that giant of charity and virtue, our lamented Don Rua, I have still the holy ambition of not being inferior to him in the affection and gratitude I profess toward our Co-operators."

After Death

Don Rua, the successor of Don Bosco, thus attests, in his deposition for the Cause of Beatification, the general devotion that immediately followed upon the death of his departed Father:

"Although in life Don Bosco had attracted a multitude of persons to him by the fame of his sanctity, yet after his death there was a great increase of devotion: the learned and noble, ecclesiastics especially, were those who evinced most confidence in his intercession. And not only from Turin, but from all parts of Italy, from France, Spain, Austria, etc., and from across the ocean, the United States, Canada, and all the other countries of America, came to me letters imploring for prayers to Don Bosco. I can certainly say that these came by hundreds every week."

There were many manifestations of the potency of his prayers. Among numerous cases reported by the pen of Father Lemoyne. I choose only three for the edification of my readers:

The parish priest of Nyas, France, tells us that one day speaking to Don Bosco of a well-known scientist of his parish who had neglected for several years the practice of his religion, Don Bosco considered for a moment and then said: "Do not lose hope: let us both pray to Mary, Help of Christians, and she will obtain his conversion." Two years elapsed and there was no sign of it. "On the morning of January 31, 1888," continues the priest, "as I was sitting in my room, I looked up and to my surprise beheld Don Bosco standing before me.

"You here, Don Bosco?" I exclaimed.

"'Yes,' he replied. 'I have come to tell you that Our Lady has granted your request.'

"I am very grateful to her and you, I said; but why did you come without letting me know? I should have wished to - but here I stopped for Don Bosco had disappeared and I was left alone. At first I thought I must have been dreaming; but on the same morning I heard of Don Bosco's death, and I concluded that he had come to visit me before going to Paradise. A few days afterwards, the gentleman whose conversion I had prayed for, made a good confession, and ever after led a most exemplary life."

Toward the end of 1887, Sister Adèle Marchesa, experienced an utter loss of sight. After several specialists had pronounced her case hopeless, she pleaded to be taken to Don Bosco. But he being then in his last illness the doctors would not permit it. When she heard of Don Bosco's death on January 31, she entreated more earnestly than ever to be carried to the Church where his body lay. Thither she was borne on the first of February, but the crowd was so great that her party could not find entrance. They returned early the next day, and Sister Adèle, kneeling by Don Bosco, took his hand and with it touched her eyes. Immediately her sight was restored. "I see Don Bosco!" she cried aloud twice. "I see you; Don Bosco has cured me." Her sight was perfect ever after.

One of the boys at the Oratory became seriously ill. Through the kindness of the Superiors, his mother was allowed to nurse him there. On February 1, being at the point of death, he suddenly looked up and his eyes became fixed on some object at the door.

"Mother," he said, turning to her, "did you see him?"

"Who?" questioned the mother.

"Don Bosco," he replied.

"Surely not; Don Bosco is dead and his body is lying in the Church."

"Well, I saw him," insisted the boy. "He came to tell me that in three days he will come to take me with him to Heaven."

"No, you will not die yet; you must get better and come home with me."

"What for, mother? Is it not better to go to Heaven?"

The mother was broken-hearted, and resolved to take him away from the Oratory. This news afflicted the sick child. "Why must I leave the Oratory?" he lamented. "I want to die under the mantle of Mary."

Though it was snowing heavily, the mother was inflexible. On his arrival at the hospital he said to the Sister of Charity: "I wish to receive the Holy Communion tomorrow."

"Then you must be one of Don Bosco's boys," said the Sister; "they are all alike; they ask at once for Confession and Communion."

"I am to die very soon, Sister; tomorrow Don Bosco will come for me."

"No, no," protested his mother, "do not believe him; he is under a delusion."

The morning hour came and brought the little sufferer his beloved Lord in the Holy Communion. His joy and calm were inexpressible. All the day the poor mother sat by his side

while he was in a sweet sleep. At five o'clock in the afternoon he awoke from his slumber, and raising his eyes to one in front of him exclaimed: "Here he is, here he is, come quickly!" A smile of joy on his face, his pure soul sped forth with his beloved Don Bosco to his early-achieved blessedness.

The apostle's reputation for sanctity so widely established, with miracles and prophecies in so great number attributed to him, there was ere long a general petition of clergy and laity that his Cause might be introduced into the Roman Court. The petition was granted by Pope Leo XIII. The "Process Ordinary," the first inquiry into the virtues and miracles of Don Bosco, was solemnly opened in Turin on June 4, 1890, and ended on April 1, 1897 after five hundred and sixty-two meetings. These acts were all conveyed to Rome, and committed for farther scrutiny and consideration to the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

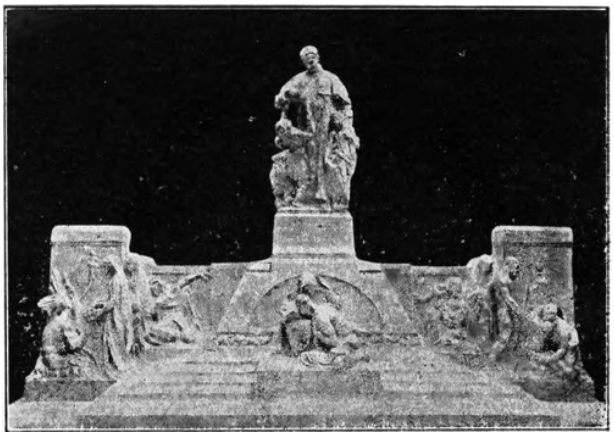
Countless, we might almost say, were the wonders made known during this first Process; they would fill volumes, tributes to Don Bosco's sanctity, from all parts of the world. Extraordinary cures of soul and body, supernatural conversions, marvelous prophecies fulfilled, wrongs righted, reconciliations brought about, reckless sons or daughters led back to duty, divine vocations, especially to the Salesian Orders, in which the finger of God was openly manifest.

The tomb of Don Bosco, their beloved benefactor and wonder-worker, became to the people of Turin a sacred place. There might be seen individuals and groups of fervent pilgrims confiding to him as in life the secrets of their grief, their present needs or their future hopes. And they built on solid rock, secure that he whose heart was a fountain of love, of pity, of refreshment for all the weak and indigent when on earth, whose prevailing prayer ever brought Heaven-sent

resources to his redeeming work, was now a still more powerful and loving advocate, his soul immersed in the splendors of the Heart of Jesus, the divine furnace of charity.

Their confidence was superabundantly rewarded; faith and enthusiasm grew as the story of cures and temporal and spiritual prodigies was noised abroad; and little pilgrimages came from the various provinces of Italy, from France, from all Europe, and even from America, to obtain healing and light at the tomb of Don Bosco. At the close of the Salesian International Congresses, held at the Oratory of Saint Francis of Sales, Turin, the Cardinals, Prelates, and other dignitaries, with Co-operators from all parts, went in solemn procession to venerate the mortal remains of the Apostle, to pay their tribute of praise and remembrance to him, and to uplift their souls to greater deeds in his silent presence.

Don Bosco is Declared Venerable



In 1907, the Sacred Congregation of Rites set the seal on Don Bosco's Sanctity by declaring that his Cause of Beatification could be introduced. Accordingly by a Decree of his Holiness the late Pope Pius X, dated July 24, 1907, the Servant of God, Don Giovanni Bosco, the Apostle of Youth, was declared Venerable.

From that day the fame of his sanctity took on a wonderful augmentation. There was universal rejoicing over the exaltation of one so beloved and venerated, not only in the Societies he had founded but where ever his name was known.

"The welcome news of the introduction of the Cause for the Beatification and Canonization of our holy Founder," records the Salesian Bulletin, "passed round the globe as a message of joy. At Turin the initiative was taken by the "Circle" of Past-pupils, the Don Bosco Club, who organized, September 29, on a large scale, a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Venerable, at Val Salice, on the outskirts of the city. The spacious courtyard of the Missionary Seminary presented a magnificent picture, the porticoes lending themselves to a wealth of artistic decoration; the central arches in front of the tomb were handsomely draped, the terrace above bearing thirty banners representing the Catholic Associations of the city. The Church itself, with its many mementos was the object of pious admiration, forming as it

does a mausoleum befitting the respectful gratitude of the Apostle's Sons and Co-operators. At three o'clock some four thousand persons had gathered about the tomb - that being the hour fixed for the commemorative service. In the seats for the presidents were His Grace the Archbishop of Sebaste, Msgr. Cagliero, Msgr. Spandre, the Very Rev. Don Rua with his chapter, Msgr. Catalanotto and representatives of Co-operators, together with the chief members of the Turin Clergy and laity.

"The band of the Valdocco Oratory had the honor of commencing the function. Msgr. Spandre then addressed the gathering, his natural gift of eloquence displaying itself in a brilliant piece of oratory that touched a chord in every heart in a eulogium on Don Bosco, 'the indefatigable Apostle of Youth, the benefactor of humanity.' An autograph letter from Pius X was read, the Te Deum was sung by all present, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given. Other distinguished speakers then addressed the assembly, and letters and telegrams of congratulation were read. A message of thanks to the Holy Father was then proposed and our Rector Major, Don Rua, congratulated the great gathering and thanked them for the tribute offered to the memory of our holy Founder, and to himself on the feast of his patron Saint. He then called on His Grace, Archbishop Cagliero, to give the blessing sent by the Supreme Pontiff, which was followed by cheers for the Pope, Don Bosco and Don Rua."

"These joyous festivals in Turin had an echo everywhere. In Rome in the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Cardinal Rampolla intoned the Te Deum, he being the Cardinal Protector of the Society of Saint Francis of Sales. And in the adjacent Hospice during a commemoration of a literary order were present a multitude of prelates, bishops and archbishops, among whom were their Eminences Cardinal

Satolli, Cassetta, Vives y Tuto (Ponent of the Cause of Beatification) and Cagiano de Azevedo. In many other cities Cardinals and Bishops expressed a desire to pontificate in the sacred ceremonies of thanksgiving. From Cataluna (Spain) came an album with 10,000 signatures to give thanks to the Cardinal Ponent of the Cause."

Quoting the Bulletin again: "Apparently not far behind our demonstrations must be ranked the thanksgiving service in another great center of Salesian work, the capital of the Argentine Republic, Buenos Ayres. The Argentine feels its supreme debt to Don Bosco and its gratitude was hearty and spontaneous in the noble display by which it celebrated the distinction lately conferred upon him. The homage was chiefly embodied in the special service held in the vast metropolitan Cathedral. Ranks of children from the Salesian Schools, connected with their day or boarding schools or Festive Oratories to the number of 4000 occupied the side aisles of the immense edifice, while the nave was crowded with people of all ranks and conditions. The Solemn High Mass was celebrated by Father Grote, Redemptorist, the music being given by combined choirs of 500 voices. His Grace the Archbishop, surrounded by the Metropolitan Chapter, intoned the Te Deum which was then taken up alternately by choir and people. Souvenirs - medals and pictures - were distributed to all who had taken part.

"The afternoon of the same day saw a great and memorable gathering at the College of Pius IX. A gymnastic display was given first, the boys from the rival College of Leo XIII distinguishing themselves in it. Four bands from Salesian Schools then gave a musical concert, which was followed by the discourse of the occasion by His Lordship the bishop of La Plata." El Colegio Pio Mono referred to, was the scene of the early labours of the second Salesian Bishop, the lamented Msgr. Lasagna, who gave to it a high standard of

mental and moral culture, so that it has played a distinguished part in the intellectual life of the State.

Celebrations of a similar character were held in all the Salesian Institutes in honor of the Venerable. Far surpassing in splendor all that had preceded, however, was the solemn Triduum held in the Oratory of Turin at the first commemoration of the Anniversary of the Venerable Don Bosco, the twentieth after his happy death, January 31, 1908.

Cardinal Richelmy of Turin and Cardinal Maffi of Pisa presided amid a concourse of Prelates, clergy and distinguished laity. The solemn functions of the Church were carried out with a magnificence worthy of the occasion. Eloquent panegyrics of Saint Francis of Sales and the Venerable Don Bosco were followed by musical performances of a high order, the opening one being a musical setting of a poem for the day by Father Lemoyne, the biographer of Don Bosco. Massed choirs with orchestra gave classical selections, and addresses were made in the various languages representing the lands in which Don Bosco's work flourishes: these poetic or prose gems were read in Italian, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Bohemian, German, Polish, Russian, Slavonic, Hungarian, Roumanian, Croatz, Arabic and Indian, all effusions of grateful hearts and cultured and appreciative minds.

The Historian of Don Bosco, Don Lemoyne

"Dearly Beloved Children in Jesus Christ: The Lord in His inscrutable and loving dispensation on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14, at 6:40 P. M., called to Heaven our beloved

Don Giovanni Battista Lemoyne

Emeritus and Honorary Secretary of the Superior Chapter, and Biographer of our Venerable Father Don Bosco, at the age of seventy-seven years, seven months and thirteen days."

This announcement of the Superior General Don Paul Albera precedes the brief but touching biographical notice of the saintly disciple and historian of the Venerable. "The departure from this life", he says, "of one who lived for so many years with Don Bosco in the most cordial intimacy, gathering up all the pulsations of his paternal heart in order to make them known to future ages with biblical sincerity, cannot but be to us all a severe trial. But may the holy and adorable Will of God he done now and forever!"

My readers will be moved and uplifted, as I have been, by some excerpts from this life, pleasing to God and man.

John Baptist Lemoyne was born in Genoa, February 2, 1839, of Luigi Lemoyne, the royal physician, and the Countess Prasca, a model of virtue for all Christian mothers. Brought up in the innocence of a Stanislaus, the youth chose the ecclesiastical career; and after pursuing his studies with the most splendid success, he was ordained priest on June 14, 1862.

The religious life, however, strongly attracted him; and Divine Providence, who loves to guide lowly and docile hearts, pointed out clearly the path he was to follow. In the Process for the Cause of Beatification of Don Bosco, he declared in these terms his Salesian vocation:

"In 1864 I had already been a secular priest for two years. Meanwhile I had heard much about Don Bosco who was reputed a saint: but I did not know that he was the founder of a religious Society. In the month of July I visited Turin for the purpose of seeing him; he was absent from the city, however, and I returned to Genoa. On the last Sunday of September, being at Belforte, a small village near Ovada, I prayed in the chapel of our Lady to know the will of God in my regard. The following morning on awakening, I heard a distinct voice at my ear which said to me: Go to Lerma! (a small village one hour's distance from Belforte) and you will find Don Bosco! It must be noted that I was quite unaware Don Bosco ever visited this region. Accordingly, I offered the Holy Mass absorbed in the thought of what had happened; yet fearing it might be the effect of imagination I imparted my dream to young Marquis Carlo Cattaneo, who answered: Dream or no dream, let us go to Lerma, and question the Pastor. This we did; and to our great astonishment learned that Don Bosco was really expected there in a few days. Sure enough, Don Bosco came. I had a conference with him and, at his invitation, I entered the Oratory of Valdocco a few days after, and in his Institute I lived with Don Bosco from that day until his death."

There was a wonderful congeniality between these two souls: Don Lemoyne was drawn to his guide with so intense an affection and admiration that from the day he set foot in the Oratory, comprehending in all its grandeur the mission of Don Bosco, he began at once to write down every action and saying of his worthy of remembrance. His eyes ever

fixed on his director, he imbibed his spirit in governing and guiding the young and his prudence in the conduct of business affairs.

Having pronounced his perpetual vows before Don Bosco, November 10, 1865, he was elected Director of the College of Lanzo, where he shone in every Salesian virtue. All under his charge, confreres, young clerics, students, and the youthful artisans, felt his perfect and universal spirit of love and devotedness, for he had an art all his own in guiding souls. The "past-pupils", from every social class, set no bounds in their manifestations of gratitude and appreciation of his great heart and heavenly virtues. The same testimony was rendered in the other Institutes which he governed during his long and active life, Mornese and especially Monferrato, "where the Venerable in order to imbue with his spirit the new-born Institute of the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians, entrusted its direction to Don Lemoyne, confident of the most happy success."

And yet during all these busy years his pen never ceased its labour of love in portraying the heroic virtues, the daily sacrifices, the great and the lowly deeds, the lofty teachings, the miracles and the prophecies of his beloved Founder. He had questioned the cherished "Mamma Margaret," and the childhood years of her favorite John are painted with simple beauty and minute detail. And on, on through the saintly career he dogs the steps of his revered hero - nothing escapes his keen eye and loving heart. God so approved of the beautiful task to which he had set himself that His Providence often brought the dear chronicler, apparently by chance, into the presence of Don Bosco when he wrought some of his greatest miracles or uttered some of his most striking prophecies.

The continual recurrence of the personal element on almost every page; the precious contact with a saint every day and hour for such lengthened periods; a Father limned for us in such entrancing, heavenly colors by Love's brush, give the wonderful "*Memorie Biografiche di Don Bosco*", a charm, almost poignant in its penetrating beauty, that one finds simply inexpressible.

"In 1883 Don Bosco summoned him to the Valdocco Oratory to be the Secretary of the Superior Chapter and Editor of the Salesian Bulletin, which he directed for nearly ten years. God so disposed circumstances that he should become the most intimate companion of the Venerable during the last five years of his precious existence, and should hear from his own mouth the relation of the many wonders that Divine Providence was effecting through him."

And during these active years he gave to the world many charming volumes of piety, books of poems and hymns, with numerous dramas for the boys and girls of the Salesian Oratories. On the death of the Venerable Don Bosco "to him was committed the great work of gathering and publishing the Biographical Memoirs. In this work the dear dead," I am citing the revered Don Albera, "consumed the last thirty-three years of his existence. With the patience of a Carthusian monk, he collected first of all the most precious documents, and then began his work of writing. In 1898, he presented to us the first volume of the *Memorie Biografiche di Don Bosco*; and after that, one at a time, eight other volumes followed. The ninth volume which is now in process of publication was revised by the dear author himself. For the remainder of the life of Don Bosco, eighteen more years, he left the written material all prepared."

The world owes an immense debt of gratitude to the gifted Salesian. His great unfinished work is still in the original

Italian; and the volumes are limited to the possession of the Salesian houses until the Church shall have pronounced definitively on the marvels related therein.

When that moment comes we trust a gifted pen will present us an English translation worthy of the great author.

Don Lemoyne's death was like his life calm and serene, his soul sweetly united with God under the protecting mantle of Mary, Help of Christians, during those last solemn hours on the Cross with his Crucified Master.

"On the morning of the Feast of the Exaltation, the Holy Viaticum was brought to him solemnly and he received for the last time with fervent recollection the dear Jesus he had so ardently loved and made others love. At his bedside was His Eminence Cardinal Cagliero, suggesting pious aspirations; and surrounding him in prayer were his Superiors and brethren who held him in their hearts' affections as the dearest relic of their departed Founder, the beloved Don Bosco. Extreme Unction was administered and the papal blessing given; his agony lasted till 6:40 P. M. when his soul passed peacefully to its eternal rest.

"And now his blessed body reposes in the cemetery with those of our many other brethren who have preceded us to the grave: we shall no more behold his sweet and loving figure; but his memory will always live with us, and we shall remember the luminous examples he has given us of prudence, amiability, profound piety and ardent love of labor and retirement."

Don Paul Albera. The Present Status of the Society

Don Michael Rua died in the odor of sanctity in 1910, in his seventy-third year; and his mortal remains lie in the same tomb at Val Salice with those of his father and model, the Venerable Don Bosco. His successor, the Very Reverend Paul Albera, was also one of the saintly founder's early children and emulated his master and his companions in the strife after perfection; so that in France they called him another Don Bosco. He was Don Rua's assistant for many years, and was frequently deputed to visit as his representative the various houses of the Institute. I have before me a record of his arrival and splendid reception at the great Salesian house, Battersea, London, "after his journeys in America of nearly three years duration, journeys which extended over every point of the Salesian missions, from the frosty shores of Tierra del Fuego up to the Lazarettoes of Colombia" - where he gave missions to the poor lepers - through Central America and Mexico, on to California, and thence, by way of Chicago, to New York. They were leisurely visits, teeming with consolation and help to his brethren, while to himself they brought not only consolation, in spite of weariness and frequent suffering, but that wisdom, bought by experience, that comes only from loving and sympathetic appreciation of the virtues, the hardships and the struggles of one's brethren. On his return to Turin he chose to represent America at a great Salesian Congress, where three Cardinals, eight Archbishops and fifty Bishops were present.

I might add that like his zealous predecessor, Don Albera has frequently visited the Salesian Institute in London, which by its phenomenal progress has amply fulfilled the prophecy of Don Bosco that Battersea would become "one of the largest and most important houses of the Congregation." Not long ago I heard that he had made a similar prediction concerning an extensive and populous city of our own country, where, however, the Salesian ship has not yet cast anchor.

It may be in place here to give a few statistics which will tend to show the present status of the Congregation. The Church numbers over four thousand five hundred of these harvesters of God; of this army, Europe claims three thousand, the Americas fifteen hundred, fifty of whom carry on Don Bosco's work in the United States, - Asia, eighty-five, and Africa, twenty-five. The prelates of Australia and Canada have long been desirous of Salesian foundations; but owing to the lack of members the Superior General has been forced regretfully to decline their liberal offers.

The Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians, organized by Don Bosco, are somewhat less in number; but they are accomplishing the same work for girls that the Salesian Fathers are achieving in their various establishments for boys, and are generally found, as we have said, co-workers with them side by side.

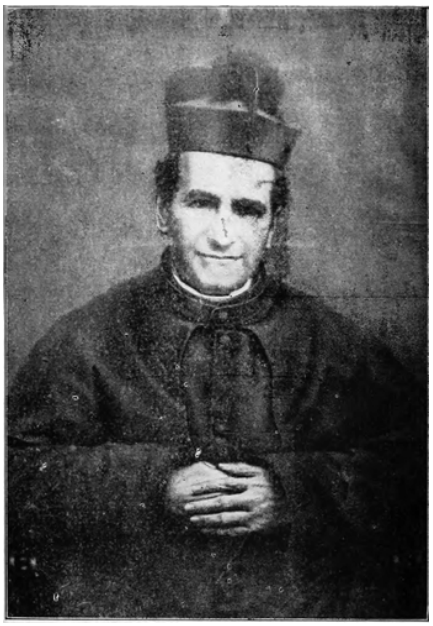
The Church has manifested her affection and esteem for the Society of Saint Francis of Sales by choosing from its ranks many able prelates. The first Salesian bishop is now a prince of the Sacred College, the venerable Cardinal Cagliero, Apostle of Patagonia. The second bishop, the saintly and eloquent speaker and writer, Msgr. Louis Lasagna, after incredible missionary labors in South America, was killed in a train wreck in Brazil, November 6, 1895.

Other zealous Salesian Missionaries whose labors in the vineyard have been crowned with the mitre and crosier, are the Most Reverend Felix Ambrose Guerra, Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba; the Right Reverend John Marenco, Bishop of Massa Carrara, Italy; the Right Reverend Francis de Aquino Correa, Auxiliary Bishop of Cuyaba; the Right Reverend James Costamagna, Titular Bishop of Colonia; the Right Reverend Louis Olivares, Bishop of Nepi and Sutri, Italy; the Right Reverend Anthony Malan, Titular Bishop of Arniso; and the lamented Prefect Apostolic of Southern Patagonia, the Right Reverend Joseph Fagnano, whose virtues and saintly death, September 18, 1916, I have briefly recorded on a preceding page.

In the field of science among many names that have brought renown to the Society may be mentioned, Father Ubaldi, founder and director of "Didaskaleio", a magazine devoted to research in the works of the Fathers of the Church; Father Mezzacasa, the first priest to receive the degree of Doctor in Sacred Scripture at the new Institute of Biblical Studies, founded by the late Pius X; Father Piscetta in Theology; Father Munerati in Canon Law; and Father Carmagnola as a sacred orator and author of many ascetical works. In the arts Father Vespignani has become celebrated as the architect of Don Bosco's Tomb, and of many beautiful churches and schools in Italy and South America; Father Grosso is an authority in Gregorian Chant; and Father Pagella is held in honor by sacred musicians over the world as a composer of polyphonic music and writer of theoretical works.

In the Industrial Arts, Trades and Agriculture the Salesian Fathers are initiating a series of textbooks, based on their long years of experience, which they hope to present ere long as models in this new department of pedagogy.

The Salesian Order in the United States: Eulogy of Don Bosco by the Apostolic Delegate



It was under the saintly Superior-General Don Rua that the first Salesian band of missionaries was organized for the United States. The late Archbishop Riordan had appealed to Don Rua for priests to minister to the needs of the constantly growing numbers of Italians in his archdiocese of San Francisco, California; and on March 11, 1897, the Society of Saint Francis of Sales was introduced into the city of the Golden Gate by the Rev. R. M. Piperni and his associates, who received charge of the Church of Saints Peter and Paul. The next year an Irish Salesian, the Rev. B. C. Redahan, was sent to assist them in their increasing field of labor. The Archbishop soon realized that another church was necessary in the southern portion of San Francisco; accordingly the Church of Corpus Christi was erected and entrusted to the Sons of Don Bosco, the Rev. Father Cassini being its first rector. In 1902 His Grace, deeply appreciative of the good wrought by the Salesian Fathers, petitioned the Superior-General for another band. Accordingly, Don Rua placed the Reverend Fathers Bergeretti and Pavan at the disposal of the Archbishop, who gave them charge of Saint Joseph's Church in the Portuguese Settlement at Oakland. A new and magnificent Church of SS. Peter and Paul is in course of erection in San Francisco, by the Salesian Fathers. The Golden Coast

receives a monthly record of Salesian events in the Don Bosco Messenger published at their Institute.

Archbishop Corrigan, emulating the zeal of his brother prelate, sought help from the Society of Saint Francis of Sales for his large Italian flock. In November, 1898, the Very Reverend Ernest Coppo, who is now provincial of the Society in the United States, with the Reverend Frederick Barni and others received charge of the Italians settled in and around Saint Brigid's parish, New York. Later his Grace entrusted to the Salesians the Church of the Transfiguration, one of the oldest Catholic Churches in the United States, and the Church of Mary, Help of Christians. Both parishes have flourishing schools and Festive Oratories.

The first Salesian College was opened in our country in 1903 under the auspices of Archbishop, now Cardinal Farley, it's principal aim being to foster vocations to the holy priesthood. The Fathers found a temporary home for their students in. the old provincial seminary at Troy, N. Y.; but at a later period they were transferred to their present beautiful and healthy location at Hawthorne, in the outskirts of New York City, where flourishes also the Columbus Institute. At the present time, 1916, there are about thirty priests carrying on the labors of the ministry in different parts of the United States who made their studies either in Troy or Hawthorne with the Sons of Don Bosco.

In 1909 the Salesians opened a new parish church, Saint Anthony, in the city of Paterson, N. J.; here the Salesian Sisters are also established. In 1912 the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary at Port Chester, N. Y., was intrusted to the Fathers, their congregation consisting mainly of Italians and Poles. On their arrival they found that one hundred and seventy-eight Italian families were separated from the church by a half-hour's distance, and few adults or children

remained practical Catholics. The Methodists, discerning their advantage, had rented a house and were carrying on a propaganda with success among the children. The Fathers, after much thought and counsel with zealous members of the congregation, proposed the erection of a chapel, to be built in the midst of the half-hour-away colony. The pious thought soon became a beautiful little stone reality at a cost of five thousand dollars; and now the little edifice is overcrowded every Sunday with a fervent congregation, while the Methodist rooms bear a familiar sign: "To Let."

At the desire of the zealous Archbishop Prendergast of Philadelphia, the Salesian Fathers opened a "Don Bosco Institute" in that city on August 15th, 1914. This house, composed of three brick buildings of three stories each, was formerly the "Drexmor"; but the owners, the Honorable and Mrs. Edward Morrell, prominent in the Catholic life of Philadelphia for their charities, generously bestowed it upon the Salesian Fathers for their social work, in which they follow the broad lines so wisely laid down by Don Bosco for winning and training the young. A printing school has been in progress for over a year and from its presses The Don Bosco Messenger is issued monthly, a chronicle of events of interest in the Salesian world and many others of import in the larger world, at the small sum of fifty cents a year, a delightful charitable offering, since it helps to feed and clothe the poor little ones of Christ. The Rev. Peter Cattori, formerly identified with the Don Bosco Institute in Italy, and later director of Columbus Institute, Hawthorne, N. Y., is the guiding spirit of the Salesian works in Philadelphia. Early in 1915 another Don Bosco Institute was inaugurated at Ramsey, N. J., for Polish boys; a high school also has been established especially for those desiring to study for the priesthood.

The Salesian Missions in the United States have advanced with the years through the indefatigable labors of the Fathers, hampered though they have been in their zealous efforts to carry out to the full the noble projects of Don Bosco, by the lack of pecuniary resources. Our people have not yet learned the advantages, spiritual and temporal, to be derived from union with the Society of Saint Francis of Sales as Co-operators, or we should not see these religious priests, destined for such extensive, boy-saving enterprises, scattered, as they are, in a few parishes, without even a novitiate to shelter aspirants to the Saint-forming rule of Don Bosco: without a House of Studies, where their youthful clerics may pursue amid the quiet scenes of nature their final course of philosophy and theology, urged on daily more and more to the attainment of heroic virtue by the holy examples of their predecessors.

This is "a consummation devoutly to be wished!" Can we not compass it for the glory of God and for the coming generation? so shall the Sons of Don Bosco train their thousands of "Knights of Christ" and upright citizens of our great Republic.

Many earnest applications are made to the Salesian Fathers for foundations in the United States and if the personnel were not wanting, few of our large cities would be without a Don Bosco Institute. My readers will appreciate a personal letter which speaks with a power of which I am incapable:

"Continue, therefore, in your apostolic task, spread might and main, the knowledge of Don Bosco's life; let the American public open their eyes to this wonderful pedagogue, writer, preacher, missioner, statesman, miracle-worker of the nineteenth century. Let the people living in these irreligious days, see what a poor, helpless priest accomplished with the help of the Most High, and of Mary,

Help of Christians. Would to God there were a Don Bosco in every large city throughout the world at the present time! What an amazing transformation we should then see! Would to God we could quickly get the means to have a good Novitiate here in the United States. We need help from the public in every possible way; but if we could launch out an appeal, we would appeal just for missionaries. Men, men, men! Behold the need, behold the solution of the problem: 'How shall we save the children, how shall we restore the families to Christian principles and practice?' Let us daily implore Almighty God to send laborers into His immense vineyard."

And now I close this imperfect study of a great apostle with the words of his Excellency, our Apostolic Delegate, to the Very Rev. Ernest Coppo on the occasion of the Centenary of the Venerable Don Bosco:

"Since four continents have felt the good effects of the beneficent influence of Don Bosco, it is perfectly right that his memory should be solemnly recorded in all places and languages. The confines of his native Piedmont and Italy were too narrow for the full play of his activity, and hence his ardent and suave zeal urged him to seek the salvation of souls beyond the mountains and across the seas. Legions of priests and sisters, his spiritual sons and daughters, animated by his zeal and example, have spread out over the world multiplying his miracles of charity in villages as well as in cities, in Africa and Patagonia no less than in civilized countries. Churches, colleges, agricultural and industrial schools, homes for the poor and missions for the conversion of the pagans have constituted their wide field of labor. It would be next to impossible to recount all the works of charity wrought by the Venerable Don Bosco and his spiritual children. Indeed, they cannot be explained unless we recognize in them the hand of God and a singular

protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was his cherished patroness under the title of Mary, Help of Christians.

"Both Church and State are indebted to him beyond measure, while history should engrave on his memory that famous epitaph, 'No eulogy is equal to his name.'"

About This EBook

The text of this ebook is taken from the book *A Sketch of the Life and Works of the Venerable Don Bosco, Apostle of Youth and the Founder of the Society of Saint Francis of Sales*, by M. S. Pine (Sister Mary Paulina Finn). The edition used was published by Salesian Press in 1916.

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The cover image at photograph of a statue of Saint John Bosco and two boys, date and artist unknown. It stands in front of the Don Bosco Salesian School in Nazareth, Israel, was photographed in 2008 by Hanna Brimer, and the image swiped from Wikimedia Commons.

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